PZ 3
.J650
W
FT MEADE
GenColl

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

D225
193

UNCLE GEORGE.

When Dreams Came True

and Other Stories

BY

WILLIAM HAMILTON JOHNSTON

A Member of the Tennessee Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, South

Nashville, Tenn.; Dallas, Tex.
PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH
Smith & Lamar, Agents
1911

PZ3
J650
W

COPYRIGHT, 1911
BY
SMITH & LAMAR

$0.75

©Cl.A305169

No.1.

To

PROF. W. R. WEBB

(Dear "Old Sawney")

whose bow abides in strength, even
though the gray ashes of consumed
years fall thick on temple and brow,
this book is affectionately dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
When Dreams Came True	7
A Foot Race for a Baby	17
Salt-Making Time	24
Crossing the Swollen Stream	31
The Squirrel Hunt	41
The Circuit Rider's First Circuit	49
A Flood of Buttermilk	59
When Billy Lost His Head	65
Piney on a Rampage	75
Old Shiney, the Giant Trout	81
The Beginning of the Big Flat Revival	88
Bandy's Bad Break	97
The Fight at Rainbow Falls	103
An Effective Cure; or, Nearly a Tragedy	111
A Terrible Accusation	117
A Strange Place for an Overcoat	124
Brother Bayless's First Sermon	130
When Uncle Mose Was Challenged	138
How Old Ephraim Was Cured of the Fits	147
When the Elder Came to Roaring Oak	157
Michael O'Harrity's Toothache	167
The Hero of the Wreck	173
That Treasury Job	184

WHEN DREAMS CAME TRUE.

WHEN DREAMS CAME TRUE.

A DELIGHTFUL company of tourists from the Far East were journeying south on a Southern Pacific Pullman in Northern California. The two heavy engines in front had been laboring hard all day, and had drawn the train up into the Siskiyou Mountains less than one hundred miles. Old Shasta Mountain, snow-clad from summit to base, had appeared in sight about three o'clock, and its fifteen thousand feet of weird ghostliness had excited exclamation after exclamation of wonder and awe. In the party mentioned there were Mrs. Allison, her two charming daughters, Misses Sue and Mary, her son Albert, a fine young fellow of twenty, and Uncle George, Mrs. Allison's bachelor brother of thirty-five. Of distinguished bearing, tall and handsome, bright, witty, and finely educated, Uncle George was easily the most beloved gentleman of all his long list of acquaintances. Why he was a bachelor was an insoluble mystery to all his friends, and many speculations had been indulged in first and

last concerning it. One said that he had never loved any one better than himself; another, that his sweetheart had died in young girlhood soon after their meeting; another, that he was waiting to make his fortune. Still others had understood that his ardent attachment for a certain young woman had not been reciprocated, and he had voluntarily condemned himself to bachelorhood for life, etc. Some one else had suggested that deep in Uncle George's soul there was a secret that some day would be given to the world.

On this day in question the Pullman was not crowded. There was a hollow-cheeked woman with a little wizened, crying baby in the back section, both ill and suffering; an old gentleman on crutches, to whom Albert had already brought in water five times; a young and very affectionate couple, consisting of a proud-looking boy of twenty-two and a rosy-cheeked lass of eighteen, that everybody knew were a bride and groom on their bridal tour. And—O yes, that sweet-faced, beautiful lady in the blue silk dress that just a while ago held the sick baby while the mother took a little nap on a pillow which the porter brought. This lady occupied the section next behind Mrs. Allison. These were all.

"Uncle George, tell us a story," said Sue. "Tell us a love story, one that is true and real, won't you?"

Now, if there was one thing Uncle George could do better than another, it was telling a good story; and when he began, other conversation instinctively ceased, eyes were drawn to him, and everybody in the neighborhood listened.

So, with his back the way the train was going, facing all the occupants of the car, after the crippled man had slipped to the end of his seat, the little sick mother had moved one section nearer, and that lovely young woman in the blue silk had settled herself also to listen, Uncle George began this very unusual story:

"About fifteen years ago one afternoon late I was riding my horse, 'Breakers,' through a dense woodland where the trees were so thick as to make twilight almost out of noonday. The roadway was broad and oval, as smooth as a floor, and the afternoon air came in refreshing breezes laden with the perfume of wild flowers and the sweet odors of the woods. 'Old Break,' as I called my horse, was cantering gracefully along, seemingly enjoying the ride as much as I. Mile after mile was laid behind us, and the delicious sense of peace and deep restfulness thrilled me through and through. In all my life before such a charming ride had never been my privilege. Soon I became aware that another horseman had turned into the road a short distance ahead, going the same way as I. A glance revealed the fact

that it was a slight young girl riding with the utmost grace a noble bay horse and traveling about as fast as I. As I came nearer (for somehow Breakers had decided that he wanted some company along that fragrant road) I saw that she was dressed in a lovely dark blue riding habit, skirt and basque, while the neatest straw hat I ever saw rested on her silken yellow tresses. When I caught up with her (the whole width of the road between us) and had bowed, I got the first glance at her face, which was altogether a face of the most exquisitely refined and chaste beauty it had ever been my privilege to see.

"Describe it? O, I can't do that! Yes, of course her eyes were blue and her complexion as white and clear as could be, and somehow grace had taken up a permanent abode on her brow and dwelt there all unknown to her, and she had the bearing of a princess. Hers was not the imitation or semblance of beauty that had to be fixed up and put on; it was beauty itself, that kind about which artists rave and poets sing and sculptors go wild. And a wonderful thing about it all was that she was as sensible and well-balanced as she was beautiful. She returned my salutation with gracious acceptance, and to a few other polite words I uttered returned answers of the utmost propriety.

"We rode together for miles. 'Break' was not

content with having the width of the road between him and the other horse. He had managed to close up that gap, had touched noses, looked deeply into the other's eyes, and they were now cantering along together, the very best friends in the world.

"Our conversation grew apace—at first shy and reserved, but a little later more and more friendly—until finally it was marvelous how much interest I was taking in every word that fell from her lovely lips. When she would look up and smile at something, I would say it seemed that heaven was just ahead, and already the music and incense of that holy place were surrounding us both. I really remember but one thing she said, and that was when a most gorgeous butterfly flitted across our path. I remarked, 'What a beautiful insect!' and she replied: 'Yes; its purpose in life is but to be beautiful, to flutter, and to die.' And so on and on we rode down that sweet aisle of the woods together, and after one hour I was as much in love with that lovely young girl as I ever expect to be in this life. In fact," said Uncle George solemnly as he grew more serious, "if ever again I meet one I can love like that or see that girl on earth, Uncle George will be trying his best to get married.

"Well, I never have spent such an afternoon either before or since, and no one knows how my

heart has yearned for that little stranger. By and by, while we were at our friendliest and the horses had been seeing how close together they could trot, I noticed that we were getting just a tiny bit farther apart. It was almost indistinguishable, but nevertheless we were not so close together. After a minute or two more, I noticed that we were several feet apart. I pulled my bridle rein in her direction, and my horse sought to close up the distance between us, but somehow could not. I tried to guide him closer to her again, but again did not succeed. I looked down to the ground (for we were by this time ten feet apart) and saw what was wrong. The road had divided into two, and the point of division was almost imperceptible. Gradually, because of this unknown but sure division, we had been getting farther and farther apart. There was no way of crossing over, either. The thing dividing us was impassable somehow, and the only way for me to get with her again was to turn, gallop two hundred yards back, and return in the other road. I was annoyed, worried, and a little twinge of fear shot through my heart. Darkness was coming on; objects were not so distinct now as before. Said I: 'Wait! I will be with you again in a moment.' I turned my horse and galloped back. When I reached the other road and looked toward the young woman, I saw, to my surprise and sor-

row, that she had not waited. She had kept going at the same gait as when I left her, and was fully four hundred yards away. I called loudly to her: 'Wait! I am coming!' But all I got from her was a half turn of the head. She did not quicken her horse's speed and run away from me, but to save my life I could not catch her. The road was no longer smooth, my horse had to pick his way along, and the distance between us continued to widen. 'Wait for me, please!' I called again as darkness settled down upon us both. 'Wait! wait! wait!' in despairing tones I called again and again, and then—I waked up! My eyes were full of tears, and I called several times after waking: 'Wait, wait; I am coming!' But behold, it was all a dream."

All the party were visibly affected by the earnest reality Uncle George put into his story. The crippled man drew a long sigh, the sick lady settled back sad and lonely; but of all the remarkable things was the effect the story or something seemed to have on the beautiful lady in the blue silk just behind them. Uncle George had noticed something strangely familiar about her; and as he was describing the young girl's face in his awkward manlike manner, he seemed to be reading some of the lines and looks from off her countenance. When he had concluded the story, her face was deadly pale, she had dropped back

into her seat, and her eyes were closed. Her mouth was slightly open, and one hand with the tightest grasp was holding a delicate lace handkerchief to her heart.

Alarmed and yet thrilled by the presence of some impending dénouement, and wondering at the not entirely strange feeling in his bosom, Uncle George secured a glass of ice water, moistened the face and lips of the lady in blue, spoke tenderly and gently to her, picked up one of her little white hands, and, carressing it lovingly, raised it to his lips just as the fair lady opened her eyes and smiled into his. What could it all mean? Uncle George act thus toward a rank stranger? They were all beginning to be quite shocked when he said to her: "O Lillie, why did you not wait for me?" And she replied: "I tried to, but somehow it was impossible."

It was but a very short time before the utmost confidence seemed to be established between them, and more and more they talked together as old, dear friends. A few more gentle inquiries began to make the mystery clearer to each of them, although surprise, amazement, magical realization, and supreme satisfaction kept them in a state of supernal joy for hours. Everybody realized that something wonderful had occurred, something too deep and sacred for the staring eyes of the public to glut their impious

curiosity upon. So they were left alone, and threaded the mazes of their sweet mystery all by themselves.

The story Uncle George had told was really a vivid dream of his young manhood fifteen years before while living at the parental mansion near Lexington, Ky., and fate never worked a more ironical trick than when it kept these two splendid young people apart for so many years.

Not five miles away dwelt Lillian Howe, the most beautiful little girl in all that favored section, who, on the same night in question, dreamed the exact counterpart of this beautiful story, which had caused such an effect that of all the many suitors that had wooed her, none had ever appealed to her. During the recital of Uncle George's dream, recognition had almost been mutual, a complete understanding of the mystery being made possible in a few hours.

It is needless to say that the Allison party straightway was increased by one new member. Uncle George had always been as attentive and kind as he could be, but now he seemed to be ten times more so. The icy gorges of Shasta, the hudge redwoods of Yosemite, the plunging, roaring surf of the Golden Gate, the solitude and overwhelming wonder of the Grand Canyon, the impurpled slopes of the Sierra Nevadas heard whispers and saw love deepen and grow too holy

for utterance and description, too sacred for one other eye even to witness.

Such affection from two such people could have but one termination. One year after the tourists' return the fine old mansion of the Howes was lighted from basement to roof in honor of the loveliest wedding ever celebrated in those parts.

A FOOT RACE FOR A BABY.

HELLO! Is that you, doctor?" came through the receiver of the telephone at one o'clock in the morning. "Well, I wish you would come to our house immediately. Our baby is suffering intensely, and seems to be very ill. Sorry to disturb you, and would not, but we are very uneasy." The doctor had heard this very same speech many, many times before, especially from young parents, and many times had rushed breathlessly into a home only to find baby suffering from some slight functional disarrangement and already better. "All right. Thank you, doctor. Get here as quickly as you can."

Now, a doctor intuitively detects disease. As soon as a room is entered, suggestions from an unknown source begin to come to him, and in a moment or two the diagnosis is made. Supplementary examinations and questionings generally confirm the first idea.

On this occasion the pallor of face and countenance, swollen by sorrow, of the young father betokened the fact that something really serious was the matter. The ghostly face of the mother bending over the tightly clasped form of a two-months-old baby confirmed the fact. A little face

tightly drawn with agony, with clenched white lips parted only to emit a faint, heart-rending scream, showed that the little darling was in mortal agony.

A hurried examination revealed to the doctor that the little sufferer was already past human aid; that it was a question of but a few hours, or maybe minutes, and the suffering would all be over. The little thing was dying of some mysterious infantile disarrangement, deep down and hidden, evading all medical skill. A tiny dose of some quieting medicine was administered, and the kind-hearted physician waited to see the end. When the worn-out mother with breaking heart had relinquished her precious burden into the tender hands of the doctor, she threw herself across the cot and wept away her sorrow and disappointment. When the little light went out as the day fades into dusk, the father got his first glimpse of the abyss of death, the goal of all flesh, and tasted of that bitterest of all cups, the suffering and death of a beloved child.

The little white casket came and the flowers and friends. The days of loneliness, too, when it seemed that the fountain of tears would never dry up, and the weeks crept away as though shod with leaden shoes. But the lonely little mother's sorrow was as fresh and poignant after a year had elapsed as ever. Not only so, but the sharp

edge began to cut into her health, she became pale and thin, her strength left her, and knowing ones said: "It will not be long at this rate ere she will follow her baby." The father, strong man that he was, had not only the grief for his baby but terrible solicitude for his wife to contend with. His business was transacted in a perfunctory way, he had no ears for news or for music, and hardly recognized a friend when he met him.

"Unless something comes back into the life of the bereft mother," said three doctors in consultation, "she won't live a month."

The little village where this man, Herbert Henry, and his wife lived was on the Great Southern Railway, eighty-five miles from Apton. A day or two after this consultation Mr. Henry, on his way to the store one morning, was attracted by a crowd on the sidewalk standing close around an excited man in the center, who was talking and gesticulating in an emphatic way. Mr. Henry heard him say: "This morning, a little after day, a pretty young woman alighted from No. 3 with two grips, holding a lovely little baby about three weeks old in her arms. After tarrying at the station a while, she went to a near-by hotel, where she got her breakfast and retired to a room. No one was thinking about her at all, nor was any attention attracted to her affairs until about three

hours after her arrival, when the maid on that floor was alarmed by the continued crying of a very small baby in Room 24. Entering, she found the prettiest little baby she ever saw lying on the bed, where it had just waked up from a nice, long nap and was crying like its heart would break. Inquiry for the mother revealed the fact that she had left the hotel a short time before, and since her departure three trains had gone in three different directions. The two suit cases were full of beautiful, costly, and dainty baby clothes, but there was absolutely nothing by which the place of residence or the name could be detected except a tiny 'Z' worked in each garment with pink silk thread. The hotel keeper got as mad as a hornet when he had examined into matters, although the hotel bill had been paid in advance. He got so mad that he picked up the suit cases and had the chambermaid follow with the baby back over to the depot, where he laid it down on the office table and told the clerks to 'keep their trash over there to themselves and not put it off on him.' Well, the baby is still down there. The railroad clerks are young bachelors and know nothing about babies, but one got a bottle and was trying to give the baby some milk when I left."

At the conclusion of this recital two men left the crowd simultaneously and started off in the

direction of the depot, walking hurriedly. One was Mr. Herbert Henry; the other a gentleman named Thomas. The two men paid no attention to each other at first, but soon noticed that as one would quicken his steps the other would do the same. This increase in gait continued until both men were walking as fast as they could and were on the verge of running. All the crowd had observed their sudden departure and intuitively knew what was up, for they all remembered Mr. Henry's loss and also that Mr. Thomas's home had never been blessed by the coming of a baby. So the whole crowd followed. As the two principals increased their gait, the crowd would do likewise, until they too were walking as fast as they could and some were almost running. Mr. Thomas had the longest legs, and therefore the best stride, so he began to move out ahead of Mr. Henry and soon was nearly ten feet in advance. Mr. Henry saw that if he won, it would be a sharp foot race. So, giving no special signal as to his intentions, he threw himself into a dead run and had passed Mr. Thomas a few feet before that gentleman realized what was up. Then he began to run. Faster and faster they went, and finally both men, neck and neck, were coming down the street, with every pound of strength they could summon, in a foot race for a baby! The way was open, with no obstructions

anywhere, and it was less than one hundred yards to the depot. Cheer after cheer broke from the pursuing crowd, and friend after friend among them urged on his favorite in the race. They were neck and neck still, with only fifty yards more to be covered. Some thought: "What if they both grab the baby at the same time? Poor little thing! Those big, rough men might pull it to pieces." On and on they went, and, like a bunch of stampeded cattle, the spectators followed. Thomas's long legs seemed about to win the day. He was five steps ahead, a lead that could not be easily overcome, and now it was only twenty-five yards to the goal, which, wonderful to relate, was a baby deserted by a heartless and perverted mother. Strong men racing for a prize of incalculable value which the natural owner had cast aside! What a sight! Well, Mr. Henry saw that he was beaten if he could not do better. So, summing up all his remaining strength, he threw it into one last powerful spurt. He caught up with his competitor, whose strength was almost exhausted. He passed him a foot or two, just enough to dart into the door of the railroad office in advance of the other man. He snatched the nursing baby from the awkward hands of the young clerk and pressed it to his bosom with his left arm. He then grabbed both the suit cases with his right hand, and the race was won.

Twenty minutes later a triumphant crowd of interested sympathizers saw a sweet, sad, bereft mother press the wee baby to her bosom, and saw the tears of joy come down her cheeks. The little forsaken stranger had found a warm nest and a loving heart such as only God can make.

SALT-MAKING TIME.

OF all the seasons of the year, the one most looked forward to, with the exception of Christmas, was salt-making time in Middle Alabama. Mind you, the time written about was many years before the advent of the railways, steamships, and other means of rapid and constant transportation; a time when people had to depend more on their own resources than they do now; a time when, if one needed any staple article or commodity, he would possibly be compelled to do without it indefinitely. Salt-making time came after the crops were laid by and the pressing work of harvest was over; when the cotton plant was blooming and before the bolls had formed; after the corn was laid by, the hay cut and put in the barn, and the oats were in the shock; in the little lull just before cotton-picking time, and when the corn must be cut or gathered. That was salt-making time.

Usually seven or eight neighboring farmers would combine and go together and stay until a year's or two years' supply would be made up, and then all would return. The place where the salt was made by these people was on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, about two hundred miles south of Union Springs. Sometimes a whole

family would go—father, mother, and children, with a negro or two. At other times just the head of the family, with a son or two and a negro to do the hardest work, would be the envied ones.

A memorable time was in 1842, when eight of the closest neighbors went together. The trip had been planned for and talked over for months. A great time was anticipated, and every arrangement and detail was gone over with minute care, for it was no small undertaking. First, the actual journey could not be made under seven days. The last hundred miles of the trip was through a sparsely settled region of interminable pine forests, boggy streams, and dim roads. Deer and bears were plentiful, and so were rattlesnakes and Indians. Food, medicine, and all kinds of camp equipage had to be carried along, together with enough feed for the horses to last until the return.

At last the day dawned that had been fixed for the trip to begin, and all was in readiness. About an hour before day everybody was waked up, dressed in a hurry, a little breakfast was swallowed, the teams of great mules and prancing horses were harnessed to the big covered wagons, the word was passed down the line, whips cracked, and they were off. Eight large white covered wagons made quite a procession down the lovely white sandy roads that beautiful July

day. When camp was reached that evening at dusk, thirty-five miles had been traveled. A supper of ham, eggs, pie, and cake was eaten which was too delicious for description, and the company made themselves almost sick eating. After supper, all climbed back into the covered wagons and were soon fast asleep.

Late Saturday afternoon they arrived at the banks of a lovely brook, caused by the bubbling up of a large spring near by. This place was about fifty miles from the coast, near where the little town of Mason sprang up some years after. Here they camped and remained in restful quietude until three o'clock Monday morning. In this brook there was caught a quantity of very fine trout and perch—in fact, enough fish was caught here to supply the whole party with all they could eat at two meals.

On Sunday morning they bowed their heads under the primeval pines, in the solemnity of its impressive quietude, and thanked God for his blessings and mercies. As one of the party read a chapter from the Holy Bible and the rest sat around on the fragrant clean pine straw, all felt that the Maker of heaven and earth was near. One little boy sitting on the banks of the stream amid the violets and yellow and pink wild flowers was especially impressed with the sweetness of the day. Rarely does so holy a day come to one.

On Tuesday at eleven o'clock the teams were halted on the white sandy beach of the Gulf of Mexico. Camp was established immediately. The great iron kettles, each holding seventy-five gallons, were taken out of the wagons and arranged four together. The salty water of the gulf was brought in buckets and the kettles were filled to the brim. Under them were built great fires of lightwood knots that roared and blew and spluttered, sending up great volumes of black smoke. The water was soon boiling, and salt-making was under full headway. When the the water had boiled down low in the four kettles, it was dipped out of three kettles and put in the fourth, and the three were again filled with water from the gulf. One negro tended the fires and brought water during the day and another during the night, for the process never stopped when once begun. When night fell on that first day's work, three hundred pounds of fine snowy salt had been made at our battery of kettles alone. It was sacked and deposited in the wagons. Piles of lightwood knots (fat pine) had been gathered and piled up near the kettles. Little trenches and reservoirs for the water to run up near the kettles and stand a while had been cleared out, for in the course of a day's evaporation the water in a little pond by the sea will become much heavier with salt than otherwise.

When everything was working well, the men left the drudgery in the hands of the negroes and disposed themselves to near-by places to hunt and fish. Deer and bears were plentiful, also birds and squirrels. As for fish, such an abundance of every kind was caught as was never before dreamed of.

One afternoon three of the men came to camp with a meal sack nearly full of turtle eggs. The way they found them was as follows: As they were walking up the sandy beach, one of them saw a huge turtle suddenly glide down the slope and plunge off into the gulf. The man estimated that it was at least thirty-six inches across the back, and did not weigh less than two hundred pounds. He shot it with his rifle before it got out of sight, and towed it back to shore and secured it. He then took the ramrod out of his rifle, ran it down in the loose sand of the seashore, and drew it out with some of the broken eggshells on it (for turtles lay their eggs in the sand); then they dug down to the turtle's nest and nearly filled the sack with the eggs. Next day there were nearly twenty gallons of turtle soup, scrambled turtle eggs, fried fish, corn bread, and roasted oysters for dinner.

The oyster beds were located about two miles out, on Deer Island. A little sailboat was secured and a party went over that morning. They

were easily found, as low tide left the upper edge of the beds exposed. The oysters were there by the ship load, and all the party had to do was to load up the boat and sail back. Oysters are not so good in the summer as they are in the winter, be-

We crossed to Deer Island.

cause they are thin and gristly; but all enjoyed them more than can be told. They were the kind that are canned and called cove oysters. None of the party dreamed that there were so many different kinds of sea animals. There was the jellyfish, just like a cup of pale gelatine floating in the water. There was the needlefish, some of which were about eight inches long and pur-

plish in color, not much larger around than a knitting needle. There were crabs, ugly, hateful-looking things, like crawfish, that seemed to go backward. There were porpoises, great black fish ten or fifteen feet long, swimming and diving every second or two after their prey. There were sharks, ugly, venomous monsters, swimming near the surface, with their two back fins sticking up above the water. There were sardines in huge schools, miles and miles long and acres wide, that gave the water another tint as they leaped and swam.

Well, all too quickly the day came when enough salt had been made and faces had to be turned toward home. Each wagon had in it not less than two thousand pounds of clean, fine white salt sacked up in strong sacks. Seashells of wondrous beauty, lovely interwoven seaweed, and other specimens had been collected for the folks at home to see. Fish, eggs, and oysters for a meal or two along the road had been safely deposited, and the party reluctantly turned their backs on the lovely expanse of the sea and started toward home. The journey back took eight days because of the heavy loads, but it was safely made and they were at home again.

CROSSING THE SWOLLEN STREAM.

YOUNG William Crenshaw had the reputation of being the most versatile and resourceful lad in all the Clay Hill section. From boyhood he had seemed to make it a study to work out of any predicament that might befall him and be ready for any emergency that might arise. If any one wanted a string at a critical juncture, William always had one, and a good, strong one too. Did a lady want her pencil pointed? William's knife was the sharpest in the crowd, and the politeness and grace with which he would step up and proffer his services were charming to anybody. In fact, the first notice his schoolmates ever took of him was once when his teacher during class exercises asked to borrow a knife. William's was forthcoming in an instant, and he put such a nice, long, regular point on the pencil, catching the pencil shavings in the palm of his left hand during the process and placing them in the wastebasket, as to call forth an exclamation of appreciation from the teacher, who held up the pencil that all the class might see, and it won their respect immediately. Those boys have taken more pains and care of their pencils and shavings ever since that time.

If a nail, a tack, a slip of paper, a pin, a slate pencil, or a match was needed, somewhere out of his hidden treasures William would produce one. It was not long, therefore, before all his companions turned instinctively to William for anything that any sudden emergency created a demand for. He was once asked the secret of his resourcefulness, and he laid bare with naïve frankness the deepest psychological reason therefor. "It hurts my feelings," he replied, "and I feel that I have been reflected upon and disgraced, if any one asks a question I can't answer, needs anything I can't supply, or requires something I can't do."

It really seemed that nothing could block him and that he could find a way out of every maze or doubt he would get into or predicament that might befall him. Once while at college he, together with eight other boys, assembled in a room on the fourth floor to read their Ovid for an approaching Latin examination. A dozen mischievous fellow-students dragged a bench against the wall outside in the hall and, looping a strong rope around the door knob, tied it so securely that the door could not be opened even a quarter of an inch. They declared their intention of keeping the nine boys in the room all night, and when eleven-thirty came the shut-ins decided that the outsiders meant what they said. Fully twenty

boys had collected in the hallway, and all had pitchers of water. All the lights had been turned out, and the attacking crowd had declared that if by any chance those inside should manage to get the door open, they would throw the water on them. Polite requests met with nothing but laughter and jeers. The prisoners would not beg, so there they were. It seemed that nothing on earth could be done but to stay up all night.

At twelve o'clock William said in a whisper: "Boys, you can all stay here if you want to, but I am going to get out."

"How on earth will you do it?" they asked.

"Don't talk so loud," warned William. "There is some way, and I am going to find it."

The boy that occupied that room remembered that he had a small rope that came around his trunk. The rope was just thirty feet long and very slender. "But," said he, "it is sixty feet to the ground."

"Get it out," said William. He doubled it, looped it around his breast under his arms, threw up the window, and had all to catch hold. "I want you to let me down to the window of the story below, which is immediately below this window. I will then run back upstairs just as fast as I can and cut the rope. Then all of you throw the door wide open, run out with what water you have in here, dash it on the crowd

outside, and we will be freed from our tormentors."

Thus it was agreed, and in three minutes the rope was cut, the sudden, unexpected charge had been made from the inside, backed up by a flood of cold, dirty water, and the fight was won.

Again, one day William borrowed a spanking team of bay horses belonging to an uncle and drove to a neighboring village to see a young lady that he was greatly interested in. He had been warned by some local rowdies of that place to discontinue his visits to the said young lady; and although he knew that he was running some risk, he just could not stay away. So on that day, feeling very proud of himself and his outfit, and hoping to get along all right, he touched the spirited horses with the whip, and away they went, making the little skeleton buggy fairly sail over the white sands of the roadway. When he entered the village early in the afternoon, he did not see a soul nor observe anything suspicious. After a pleasant visit of two hours, he came out with the young woman to take a short drive, and still saw nothing of a suspicious nature. He helped her into the buggy, untied the horses, got in himself, and drove fifty feet down the road before anything happened; but something occurred then, and it certainly was enough. Both the hind wheels came off the buggy at the same instant and

let the rear end of the buggy drop down to the ground. Neither was hurt or even thrown out, for the buggy was a low one and the sand broke the force of the fall. Nor was this all. About fifteen of the young native rowdies ran out in the road from their near-by hiding places and began to guy him for all they were worth. Some threw pine burrs and rocks at William, and the crowd seemed about to charge on them and finish up the work. The young lady began to cry with indignation at the insulting treatment, but William was not in the least phased by the situation. He quickly helped the lady to alight, cast a quick glance back for the axle nuts that held the wheels on, and, not seeing them, concluded that the rowdies had not only removed them but had thrown them away.

What on earth was he to do? To surrender would be everlasting disgrace. People would laugh at him forever and pity him. And what about the young lady? She would be mixed up in a hateful, practical joke with a young man that could not extricate himself. This would never do. Something had to be done, and done quickly.

William's resourcefulness did not desert him in this hour of great need. Quick as a flash, a hundred times quicker than it takes to tell it, an idea struck him. He got one wheel, lifted up the

axle, and slipped it on. He got the other wheel, lifted up the other end of the axle, and slipped it on. Then he untied the two hitch reins from the horses' bits and securely fastened each wheel with a rein to the side bars of the buggy, as you lock a heavy wagon when going down a hill. He helped the young lady into the buggy, touched the spirited horses, and fairly flew down the road, the hind wheels, of course, not turning, but holding the buggy up all well and good, and making such a dust behind them as soon to shut them out from the view of the astonished and whipped young rowdies whose vandalism had been put to naught. After a mile's drive, they returned to the young lady's home in state, with heads up and no harm done. Not a soul was in sight. The buggy taps were found on the fence, where the crestfallen young fellows had respectfully placed them and then gone away.

William Crenshaw graduated in medicine two years after this and settled down near White Water, in Middle Alabama, to practice his profession. Such a man was not long in securing all the practice he could attend to. For ten miles around, where he was not actually the physician in charge, he was the consulting physician when the malady became serious and dangerous.

One March morning at about seven o'clock, in the midst of a driving rain which had been fall-

ing for twenty-four hours, a sawmill hand dashed up to William's house and reported that Mr. Poindexter, who lived a mile the other side of White Water, had started out to get William to come and save the life of his wife; that he had gotten as far as White Water Creek and found the bridge washed away and the stream a roaring torrent fifty feet wide and fifteen feet deep. He had called across the creek, above the roar of the torrent, and asked one of the sawmill hands to gallop up to the doctor's and see if by some means he could cross the stream and save the life of his wife, who was bleeding to death from an accidental cut in the temple, resulting from a fall on a large, sharp knife. Mr. Poindexter was a very worthy, hard-working young farmer, and loved his wife with all his heart.

"There's no chance on earth for you to cross White Water Creek, though," said the messenger. "The horse or man does not live that could swim it, and every bridge up and down the creek for twenty miles is gone."

"All right," said William, "we'll see."

The faithful gray horse was saddled in a moment, the medicine case and surgical instruments and appliances gotten together, and off at breakneck speed they went through the cold, driving rain.

Arriving at the sawmill on the banks of the

White Water, William took in the situation at a glance. To attempt to ford the stream on horseback would be to commit suicide and drown a good horse. The narrowest place was fifty feet wide, and in places it was a hundred. The water was roaring downstream like a mountain torrent, pitching and surging like all the lost souls in the bad place. It was still raining and the creek was still rising. What on earth could be done? One thing was sure: William was going to cross that stream. If nothing else could be done, he could tie his medicine case and instruments to his back and swim, if he were drowned in the effort. The life of that young wife must be saved at all hazards. Maybe she is already dead! No. A messenger had come down to the water's edge a short time ago and reported: "Husband and mother are holding the artery and could hold out a little longer. The mother has fainted twice already; and if there is any chance, in God's name hurry up and don't delay!"

William's wonderful inspiration did not desert him in this hour of great need. A precious life was at stake that he could have out of danger in five minutes after arrival. He went to the point where the creek was narrowest, about fifty feet. He noted that the bank on his side was about ten feet above the roaring torrent, and on the other side only five feet. He also noted that a great

oak tree seventy-five feet high grew on his side not five feet from the edge, and that thirty-five feet above there was a large, strong limb extending far out past the middle of the stream. He asked for a rope, and they brought him a small sea grass rope about sixty feet long. He started to climb the oak, but an active and nimble sawmill hand, who had been watching every motion with anticipative interest, snatched the rope, tied one end around his waist, and went up the tree like a squirrel. Out on the limb he climbed as far as he dared, and, directed by the hand of William, taking all the slack up in the tree, made the rope fast and secure and returned to the ground. William tied a round stick on the end of the rope for a handle, secured his medicine case to his back, caught hold of the handle of the swinging rope, went back as far as the end of the rope would permit, ran with all his might to the edge of the bluff, and swung out over the roaring stream. His calculations were all perfect. His feet barely touched the foaming water, and he sailed clear across until he was just over the bank on the opposite side; then he released his hold and dropped lightly to *terra firma* below.

Arriving at the afflicted patient's home, it was a matter of but a moment to gather up the end of the lacerated artery and tie it; a few moments

more to cleanse the wound and sew up the edges. Then the lady was out of danger and resting peacefully on the snowy white pillow of her couch.

The word "can't" is a disgrace and should be avoided like a curse.

THE SQUIRREL HUNT.

ARTHUR BENNETT'S father was a merchant and sold hardware. This boy's proudest day dawned when, at about fifteen years of age, he was permitted to unpack and clean up a large consignment of guns—single-barreled and double-barreled shotguns and rifles —all old-fashioned muzzle-loaders. During the unpacking it was discovered that one beautiful double-barreled shotgun of light weight and fine finish was seriously damaged. The artistically carved wooden stock was badly split and was almost in two pieces. This unfortunate accident caused many regrets to be expressed on the part of those doing the work, for it was absolutely worthless in this condition. The father's exclamation was, "What a beauty!" and Arthur said: "What a pity it is broke! I wish it was mine."

Pretty soon one of the old clerks came to him and said: "How would you like to own that gun? If you will get your papa to give it to you, I will show you how to fix it almost as good as new at very little cost."

It really cost only $4.50 by the dozen. After a little persuasion, the damaged gun was pre-

sented to its new owner. The old gentleman referred to then advised that a piece of thin sheet brass, two and a half inches square, and a dozen tiny brass screws be bought. The sheet brass was hammered to fit the wooden stock over the split place, and the little brass screws were used to hold it there. In an hour Arthur had the best gun, all his own, that he ever possessed. A brass-tipped powder horn, a shot pouch that would measure the loads right into the muzzle of the gun, and a game bag were added, and he was thoroughly equipped for hunting.

A chance to go hunting was soon presented. Sam Alexander was employed as watchman of the government construction barges on the Chattahoochee River, about fifteen miles below the city of Columbus, Ga. Low water had stopped all work, so the barges and machinery were left in the hands of this thoroughly competent man and a fine young negro cook. Two-thirds of the time they had absolutely nothing to do. The bilge water had to be pumped out of the holes in the barges every day and the rooms, bunks, and machinery had to be kept scrupulously neat and clean.

This fine fellow sent a kindly message to Arthur and an older brother to come down on the train to Fort Mitchell and spend a few days squirrel-hunting. Anybody reading this can

guess with what eagerness the invitation was accepted and how quickly they began to prepare for the hunt. The mended gun was cleaned and recleaned. Although it was not dirty, it was oiled until it shone like a mirror. Ample shot, powder, caps, and wads were secured; and when the afternoon came for them to take the M. & G. train for Fort Mitchell, they were ready for a month's siege. Mr. Alexander met them at the station, and a short walk of thirty minutes brought them to the river, which was crossed in a bateau over to the barges. It was then nearly sundown, so they contented themselves with catching a few fish that afternoon and enjoying the delicious cool atmosphere and gentle rippling of the river as it made its way to the Gulf of Mexico. About dusk supper was announced. And such a supper! That appetizing spread affects one's appetite yet when he remembers it—the bright, clean coal oil lamp in the dining cabin, the spotless white linen tablecloth, the crystal glasses, the steaming coffeepot, the dish of ham and fish, the boiled rice, the scrambled eggs; and with it all the good cheer, the novel surroundings, the hearty hospitality, the smiling black face of the fine young cook, their very great appetite, and the delicious odors. Nobody could keep from enjoying it to the fullest extent.

The gentle murmur of the river soon lulled all

into a deep, restful sleep that was broken only by the voice of the cook announcing that breakfast would be ready in fifteen minutes. They were all ready sooner than that. Outside it was pitch dark, and the clock said it was not quite four. When breakfast was over, a few gray streaks in the eastern heaven announced that daybreak was near at hand. The dark waters of the river were barely discernible when they all got into the bateau to cross the stream; but by the time the river was crossed and the bateau secured to the other side, objects began to be seen distinctly, and the squirrel hunt had begun.

Now, Arthur was just a young lad and had a gun that had never been shot. The others made much sport of him. They said that his gun would burst at the first shot; that he could not hit a barn; that he did not even know how to load it; that he would get excited and put the shot in first; that during the whole hunt he might kill one squirrel, etc. But away down in his soul Arthur said to himself: "You fellows had better be careful or I will get more than both of you put together."

Mr. Alexander had a very good squirrel dog, a little black-and-tan fise with sharp eyes and sharper nose; but he left him at home, saying that they could do better without him, and that he

himself was "as good a squirrel dog as was ever made." And he was.

Pretty soon they came to a green bay tree growing down in the river bottom, and Mr. Alexander's practiced eye saw a squirrel run to the tree, jump up behind it, and disappear up in the thick foliage. The tree was surrounded by the three hunters, each quietly taking his place. Then one of them made a slight noise by shaking a limb of a tree, and instantly the squirrel leaped to the opposite side, away from the noise and over to Arthur's side. His gun was instantly leveled on it and dead, steady aim was taken; but just as he pulled the trigger and the report of the gun rang out, the squirrel jumped to another limb, and Arthur had missed. Another gun went "Bang!" and just as it did Arthur saw still another squirrel jump up to a higher limb and, taking quick aim, killed it so suddenly that both squirrels hit the ground at the same instant.

In a few minutes another squirrel was treed, and before they left that spot they had killed six squirrels (two of which were flying squirrels) and had fired from all three of the guns not less than twenty shots. It sounded like a young war had broken out in the Chattahoochee bottoms. A little farther down toward Uchee Creek a large squirrel ran up a little tree; and as soon as one shot had been fired at it and missed, it ran

straight down again and up the steep river bank forty feet above, and then up to the very top of a tall pine tree, at least ninety feet high, that grew on the edge of the river bank. Not less than four shots were fired at the active little animal while it was going up; but none touched it, and it seemed that it bore a charmed life. They climbed up the river bank and, after the greatest difficulty, the squirrel was located on the upper side of a limb fully eighty feet from the ground. Shot after shot was fired at it without effect until finally, just as Arthur's brother was about to take a last shot at it, it suddenly jumped out of the tree on the bluff side, a fall of at least one hundred and twenty feet, down to safety; but by a good shot it was caught on the wing, so to speak, and fell dead near the brink of the river. As many as five squirrels were killed during the day in one tree. The hunters had the very best luck.

A large covey or partridges also was flushed, and a dozen of them were added to their game bags. Several rabbits jumped up and ran, lickety-skit, for dear life; but run as fast as they could, the hunter's shot would run faster, and scarcely any could get away.

In the midst of the dark twilight of the Uchee primeval forests the hunters spread their lunch on a grassy plot and drank from a bubbling freestone

spring of the sweetest water one ever tasted. Here Mr. Alexander showed them a curious freak of nature. Two trees, about nine inches in

Arthur killed more than all.

diameter and growing only three feet apart, were joined solidly together about seven feet from the

ground and were fixed and immovable, thus making a perfect letterlike capital "H." It could not be determined where one tree in its projection had begun or where it left off. The bark and union of the two trees were perfect. They had been beautifully married together by some fairy priest of the woods, and each strengthened the other so that they were unshakable. One was a water oak, the other a hickory, and they are doubtless standing yet if some axman's cruel stroke has not laid them low. Arthur never knew how two became three times stronger than one until he saw that sight.

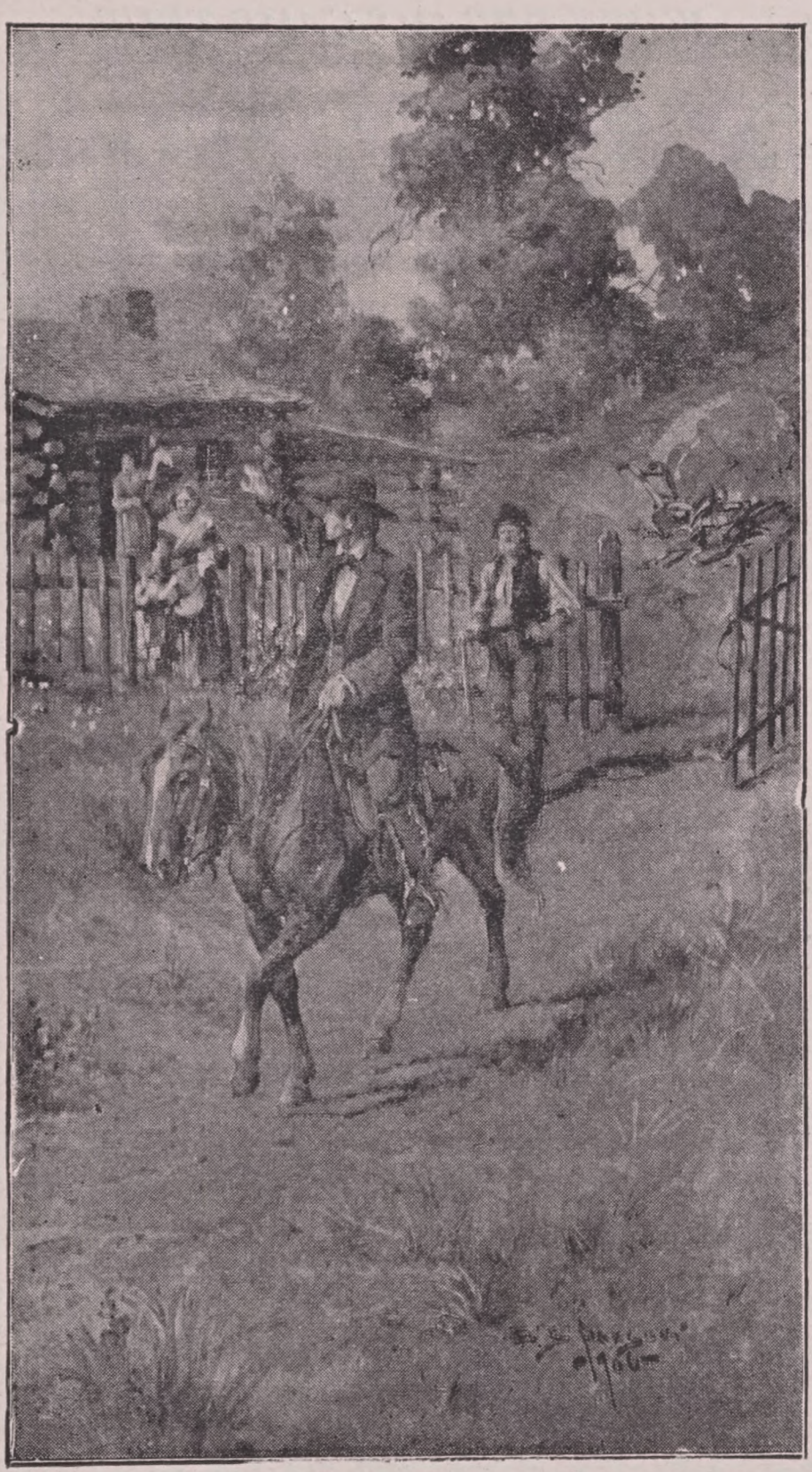
When they got back to the barges that night, they counted out their game. In spite of the fact that Arthur was but a boy and the others were grown, in spite of his broken gun and all their ridicule, he had beaten them both put together. There were thirty-seven squirrels all told, and Arthur had killed twenty-five of them. Twelve partridges had been killed, and Arthur had killed two of them. Nine rabbits had been killed, and Arthur had killed three of them. They never ridiculed him again, and they listened when he gave advice about hunting.

THE CIRCUIT RIDER'S FIRST CIRCUIT.

JOHN WESLEY TRIGG was called to preach. There was absolutely no doubt of that. This was an unquestionable fact, not because he was already a preacher, for he was not; neither was his father, brother, or any of his kith or kin as far back as the family records or memory went; nor was it because he was sure he could preach or knew anything much about the plan of salvation or other theological tenets. He knew it because he awoke one day with a mighty, thrilling joy tugging at his heart, suggesting that God wanted him to be a preacher. He prayed early and late over it. And when he yielded, he was happier still; but when he refused, he was heavy and troubled. He had no money, friends, or education, and the way was obscure. But somehow when he began to prepare he found, to his amazement and delight, that one after another of the gates of opportunity flew open to him, a Hand led him in the darkness, and a sure Foundation sustained him in moments of doubt, adversity, and discouragement. By the hardest kind of work he got a good education, was licensed to preach, and on the seventh day of the following October he was admitted into the Annual Conference on trial, whereupon his life work began.

On the sixth day of the session he saw the reverend and dignified bishop rise up with a manuscript in his hand, heard seventeen words of a long speech delivered by this soldier of the cross to itinerant Methodist preachers on broadly obvious facts, and heard himself read out: "Blowing Cave Mission, J. W. Trigg." After much inquiry this pastoral charge was located in the Blooming Grove country, back of Highland Rim, seventy-five miles from Northcut Pass.

Mounting his faithful old gray horse, he set out immediately for the front with rapidly beating heart. He would go down there and establish the gospel on a firm footing in those parts. "Anything that is necessary to be done can be done" was one of his main working mottoes. No distance, obstacle, hardness, nor any other condition should be in his way. He intended to overcome everything in his path, be wise and thoughtful, continue long in prayer, and at the end of the year bring up such a report from the Blowing Cave country as would be a proof of his call to preach. His backbone stiffened and the cold chills of lofty determination ran up and down his spinal column. His heart was light, and now and then such a thrill would shoot through his bosom as would bring tears to his eyes. He could even then see some of the results of his ministry: weeping transgressors coming to his



Farewell to home. (51)

Lord and pleading for mercy, showing forth the fruits of pardon and faith in holy lives of activity in the Church; sad and broken-hearted women comforted and blessed, transformed into lovely Christian characters; the boys and girls, sobered by his fiery appeals for spirituality, putting away their worldliness and sinful amusements; the old neighborhood infidel silenced and convicted, bringing his reign of ruin to an end, etc. All such thrilling visions as these stirred his breast with the highest emotions, and he thanked God over and over again that he had called him to preach and had given him a place to work.

Before he had been on his circuit two weeks, four things happened that sobered him up somewhat and taught him the sternness of the contest. It was not tin soldiers in mimic warfare that he was manipulating, but real war, hilt to hilt and buckler to buckler, that was on. All disillusionments are severe and sometimes fatal. Poor young man! He thought everybody was as honest as he thought he was, that everybody had ideals as lofty as his, and that everybody was as anxious for the millennial dawn as he. Poor fellow! His was a rough awakening, but it was very necessary. You see there is nothing easy about the salvation of the world or the conversion of sinners. If there were, it would all have been done long ago. Enough sermons have been

preached, intercessory prayers offered, martyr blood shed, and vicarious sufferings endured to save this old world twenty times over if this were easy to do.

Well, the first rough shake that he got was on the second day after he arrived at Bisco, the little town that was to be his headquarters. The little country school had its closing exercises that day, and Mr. Trigg was asked to make an address. He did so. In it he said: "Now, boys, aim to be men—men in the fullest sense. You never can advance on that, for a man as God intended him to be is higher than the angels. Don't try to be an angel; it is better to be a godly man than to be an angel." Now, there was sitting close by an old chronic kicker by the name of Sprouse, an intelligent sort of a man that few people liked, but who wielded great influence thereabout. This old gentleman took great umbrage at the young man's "blasphemous mistake," as he termed the comparison between men and angels, and raised a great hue and cry against him that annoyed, hampered, and crippled him all the year.

Another body blow was received the following Sunday morning. He had just been introduced to the three stewards at Pushback, his farthest appointment, when one brusque gentleman asked him: "Why did not the bishop send us Brother Jenkins? We all wanted him."

"I don't think Brother Jenkins's charge was willing to give him up," replied the young preacher meekly. "So they sent me to you instead," he added pleasantly and apologetically.

"Yes," snarled the official in question. "We always get the tail end down here."

This was deadening, and to his dying day the young man winced under the cut.

The third lick was when the eleven stewards met together to fix the salary for the ensuing year. The last pastor's salary had been set at $300, but he had been paid only $274. Poor, dear man! He had been preaching twenty years and had not found out how it felt to be paid his salary in full or to receive all that was coming to him. In this regard he had been treated worse than the cotton field hands, negro cooks, and washerwomen. These had every week received all contracted for, while he was sent away unpaid. Every year of his ministerial life there had been a deficit in his salary of from $25 to $100, and he had never received as much as $300 per year in his life. He had read books on "Ministerial Manners and Customs," "Clerical Morals," "Self-Denial," "Should a Preacher Ever Go in Debt?" "Prayer and Consecration," etc. It is true that he had never seen lying around in the homes of the people he visited any such books written for laymen and read by them; nor had he observed

any very great earnestness displayed by any one for the preacher's salary to be paid. So for the twentieth time he had gone to Conference with a deficit on his salary. What a crime! What a shame and outrage! Such heart-rending neglect disgusts even old Satan himself.

Well, on the day in question there was a determined effort made to cut the salary. "We paid only $274 last year to the preacher, and that is all we can pay this year," said Bracket. "Let us promise what we pay, and pay what we promise."

"Them's my sentiments exactly," said Moore, "and I am not willing to tax my people more than they will pay."

"You are all wrong," said Jackson. "Let us promise what we should pay, and *pay* it."

But the fight went on and on. Some grew mad, red in the face, and hurled something in Jackson's teeth about his Church monopolizing all the preacher's time, and the preacher spending more time at Jackson's house than anywhere else. After much talk they compromised the matter by fixing the salary at $292.50. "Well," said Brother Trigg, surprised beyond measure, "no one values salvation at all, a preacher's work is nothing, and all the sacrifice is packed off on him."

The fourth lick was a solar plexus blow, so

to speak. At Pullen's Branch, all unknown to Brother Trigg, the entire Church membership and residents of the community were divided into two parties. These two parties were headed on one side by old man Carter and on the other by old man Crawford. The Carters and the Crawfords had divided that country for years, and the untoward, hateful contest was just at this time at its highest. They and their followers sat on different sides of the church, and would neither mingle nor mix with the rest. If the Carters started an enterprise, the Crawfords would frown it down. If the Crawfords proposed an improvement, the Carters would laugh it away. When the pastor would give out a hymn on Sunday morning, if old man Carter started it to a tune, the Crawfords would not sing it. If old man Crawford pitched it to a tune first, the Carters would not sing it. And so it had been going on for months.

Well, the second Sunday of Brother Trigg's pastorate, knowing nothing whatever of this chaotic behavior, he began his first service there by rising and giving out that grand old hymn, "A Charge to Keep I Have." A cynical observer over in the corner saw old man Carter find the hymn hastily, moisten his lips, take in a full breath or two, and get ready to raise the tune first. This man glanced over at old man Crawford and ob-

served the same things taking place. He, too, was ready to go off in a twinkling. Each followed the reading of the hymn clear down to the end with the closest attention, ready at the proper moment to start the tune. Mr. Cynic began to wonder: "If they both pitch the tune on the same key at the same moment, what a fine chorus they will have! And won't the young preacher be charmed with the sturdy voices and great effort! But suppose they are not on the same key and each follows his leader all the way through, what then?"

But further meditation was cut short. As the preacher was finishing his reading, both old gentlemen took in a long breath at the same moment, and at the same instant began to sing, not only on different keys, but with different tunes altogether, followed in full chorus by the devoted followers of each. Now, was not that confusion let loose? All realized what was done and tried to follow his leader in louder tones than the other. Some lost the tune altogether and forgot what was being sung, so they made up by yelling at the top of their voices.

At first Brother Trigg was swept completely off his feet, shocked beyond measure. He had never dreamed of anything like this. Recovering his equilibrium, however, he arose as they were singing the third line, waved his hands impatient-

ly for silence, and, when this was secured, said: "For heaven's sake, brethren, what does this mean? Do let us worship God decently and in order." He then pitched the hymn to another tune, and all joined in the singing.

A FLOOD OF BUTTERMILK.

DID you ever see a bee swamped in its own honey? It is a spectacle at once pitiful, tragical, and humorous—in fact, the humorous always grows out of the tragical, and to a sympathetic heart is seasoned with the pitiful.

Brother J. had an experience once while pastor of two Churches (a double-barreled station) that smacks of all three of the qualities above mentioned. The sweet and gentle mistress of the parsonage was ill, very ill of a stubborn malarial fever, and their faithful friend and adviser, the country doctor, was in daily attendance at her bedside.

Now, it means something when serious illness enters a preacher's home. He is a stranger. His means are limited. He has no relatives in the community. He has helped many others, and they look upon him as a helper and not as one to be helped. Means of communication are limited. The pastor hesitates to ask for favors and is diffident about putting others to trouble. Deep suffering always ensues when the pastor or his wife in country places gets seriously ill. On this occasion the illness became so severe and serious that all solid food was forbidden, and a glass of fresh, cold buttermilk every two hours, night and

day, was prescribed. This kept up the patient's strength and helped her fight the disease. Their cow, Old Brindle, a kind, good old thing that gave them five gallons of milk a day in season, was not giving milk at the time. So their kindly neighbor, the doctor's wife, would send a large bucketful each day.

Late one afternoon, when the fever was at its worst and anxiety was at its highest, the doctor's wife sent word that the milk had not "turned" and she could not supply them any that afternoon. This report brought consternation. There was no messenger to send elsewhere, no means of communication, no passing dairy wagons nor corner groceries where such things were sold.

Failure to secure this, the only article of diet the sufferer could take, would be a privation desperate indeed, and might bring consequences of the most distressing character. The more the husband thought of it, the more worried and desperate he became.

Just at the moment when he was most worried his friend and parishioner, Mrs. Sory, drove her buggy up in front of the parsonage to make inquiries about the sick wife. The situation was explained to her. "Sister Sory," said he, "my wife can take no food now but buttermilk, and Mrs. Bradley, who has been kindly supplying us,

cannot send us any to-day. Could you possibly send us some without stinting yourself?"

"We have the greatest abundance, and you are welcome to all you need; but I fear I cannot send it, as Mr. Sory is waiting for the buggy now to go several miles on an important errand before dark. I will go home and see, but don't depend on it," said Sister Sory. And she drove rapidly away.

In a few minutes a very dear friend, Mrs. K., drove up to make inquiries about the sick wife, and the preacher related to her all that had just been told Mrs. Sory.

Said he: "Do you think you could send us some milk this evening, Mrs. K.?"

Said she: "I don't know. I left Mr. K. for a few minutes only, and he is waiting impatiently now for the horse and buggy to go to Howell and return before night. But if it is possible, I shall accommodate you." She drove off.

Then a son of Mrs. L. passed. Said the pastor: "Robert, do you suppose your mother could send us a bucket of milk this afternoon? Mrs. J. can take no nourishment now but milk. None of the ladies to whom I have spoken are sure of supplying us, and something must be done."

Robert replied that he would go home and speak to his mother about it, but doubted that relief could come to them from that quarter.

At this the poor minister was quite panic-stricken. By a passing negro he sent word to Sister P. of the condition of things, and asked help; but the negro was a trifling fellow, and it was not thought that the message would reach her. By one of his little children the pastor sent to a neighbor a short distance away; but she was not at home, and the child left the request with her little daughter.

At last, as good luck would have it, Mrs. A. came to see them; and when the minister had explained his predicament, to his very great relief she said: "Why, we have plenty of milk, and I will go right over home and get you some now." She was gone but a few minutes, returning with a good supply of delicious fresh buttermilk; and all fears from that source were at an end.

A crystal goblet one-third filled with cracked ice and poured full of fresh, thick buttermilk was soon pressed to the parched lips of the fevered sufferer, and with a smile she drank all she wanted. Greatly refreshed, she laid her aching head back on her pillow and soon dropped off to sleep.

But things began to happen fast just then, and in the most unexpected way. Did it ever occur to you that the very best time in the world to get things is when you do not need them? One is least likely to get that which he needs most, and most likely to get that which he needs least.

Sister S., whip in hand, with flushed cheeks and a foaming horse, dashed up to the front gate and handed down a two-gallon bucket of milk, saying: "Empty this quickly; Mr. S. is impatient to be gone." Hardly had she disappeared when Sister K. trotted her old family nag up to the parsonage gate, saying: "Here is some milk for Mrs. J. Empty quickly, for Mr. K. must take the horse and hurry away." It was done. Then Mr. C., a steward, who had been told by Mrs. K. on her way home of the sick wife's need, came afoot across the fields with a three-gallon bucket of buttermilk and a gallon bucket of sweet milk. "Empty," said he. And it was done. In ten minutes a bucket arrived from Sister L., and then one from Sister P., all in a hurry, with the request: "Empty and send the bucket back."

When the dust had all settled under the hurrying footsteps of men and horses and wheels, Brother J. took stock. Every bucket, every pan, and every bowl they had was full of milk. He had even filled the stove pots, and one bucket had been slyly slipped out into the back yard and emptied behind a tree, so that it might be sent back and the joke not be discovered.

Nor was this all. Things having begun to happen, it seemed that they would never cease—like an old family clock that once went on a strike about striking, and so remained for a whole day,

but then declared the strike good and off by striking three hundred and seventy-five times before it quit. For, last of all, it came to pass that a modest messenger arrived from the charming Sister B., the doctor's wife, remarking meekly: "I have brought you a little milk. Mrs. B. did not think she could churn this afternoon, but the milk 'turned,' and here it is."

It was commonly reported soon afterwards that the buttermilk had come in such a sudden flood that there was then enough on hand to drown all of the preacher's six children and whitewash the fence in addition.

WHEN BILLY LOST HIS HEAD.

BILLY was just an ordinary, everyday sort of a small boy, about eight years of age. He was the youngest son of his dear mother, a hysterical, high-strung, nervous lady just as good as she could be, and she could be mighty good, especially when everything went to suit her, which was seldom the case, of course. But Billy's mother was good, anyhow—good even when she was not so good.

Billy was just like any other little boy. He could not sit still very long at a time, and when he was compelled to do so even for a short time it give him a great deal of trouble. His legs and ankles itched and wanted to move and run and jump, and that strange, ticklish feeling would move up to his hips and make him wriggle and wriggle, and finally land in his lower ribs, when he would be compelled to giggle or laugh outright, and sometimes he would have to yell or hello just as loud as his throat would stand and his lungs permit. After such an outburst of spontaneous excessiveness, he would instinctively dodge or get up and run out or do something else that was strange and unusual in anybody but a boy. But Billy was the sweetest brown-eyed, tousle-head-

ed boy in Austin. Everybody knew that, and many had already said so before that day dawned when he lost his head. It is strange but true that the safety of every ship is dependent on its weakest bolt. Banks break or hold by the strength of their weakest officials, and no race horse can trot faster than his weakest leg will permit. A very small boy can wreck very large expectations.

Now, Ben Tower and Merina Mason were fixing to get married. Everybody knew that, from the smith that shod the horses to old Miss Sara at the head of the street, who knew everything. Ben did not tell anybody. He was a bashful young fellow and was staying away from town a great deal of late. Merina did not tell many, and they had promised faithfully not to tell anybody; but still the public mind was confident that Ben and Merina were going to get married. Old Miss Sara had her suspicions first aroused when, during a visit or two at the Mason home, she found Merina "doing nothing but crocheting trimming and quilting all the time." Then when Merina and her mother went to town and came back with arms and arms full of bundles, she just knew what was up. And that settled it. Everybody was interested, and the interest rose to fever heat when it was announced that the wedding was going to be at the church and everybody was invited; that the minister from Columbus would

say the ceremony; that there would be eight bridal couples, with the wedding march on the pipe organ; that a reception would immediately follow at the Mason mansion; that the presents were

The wedding march on the pipe organ.

already coming in; that Mr. Mason was going to give Ben the Babbitt place down the creek; that Walt Howell, Merina's other faithful suitor, had threatened suicide and had said that Ben should never have Merina, etc.

On the afternoon of the wedding day everybody was electrified by the report that Walt, slightly intoxicated, had just ridden through the town at breakneck speed on his spirited horse, and that he had with him a double-barreled shotgun. So when the six or seven hundred people assembled at the church that evening, they were expecting something to happen. The whole populace was nervous and excited and wrought up. Many things had been told and retold, nor had anything lost a whit in the telling. So all were expecting something to happen. Old Miss Sara said: "I feel in my bones that there is going to be trouble." But then Miss Sara didn't have to reach deep to get to her bones. So everybody was sure something would happen, and it did. That is one thing you can depend on always—that something will happen—and this interesting occasion was no exception to the rule.

Billy's mother and Billy went. Billy's mother did not want to take Billy especially, nor did Billy care to go; but if Billy's mother went, Billy would have to go. There was nothing else for Billy, so Billy went. These two went early to get a good seat, going at least an hour before the wedding was scheduled to occur, and weddings are proverbially late. From scriptural immemoriality until this day of grace, weddings are late. And the delay is always charged up to the bridegroom

—very justly, too, I think, for the bride is always ready. They went early, Billy and his mother; but as early as they went, the house was already half full, and Billy and his mother got a seat on the inside of the pew next to the middle window on the right side of the church, about halfway to the rear, Billy on the end of the seat next to the window. Now, the young people had been working hard all day on the church, and at sundown it was most beautifully decorated. Wreaths, vines, flowers, and lace drapery were everywhere. The middle windows on each side had received special attention. Heavy creamy lace curtains had been brought from the Mason home and hung in these middle windows, and others had been crossed full length over them and tacked to the wall, the effect being the same as a Maltese cross. The lower ends had been caught up by delicate pink ribbons in a graceful fold and attached to the side of the window. In the center of each window base there was a lovely silver candelabra holding five varicolored wax candles. Now, as I said, Billy was sitting next to this window, at times almost enveloped in some of the folds of the lace curtains. It was the plan to turn down the gas somewhat just before the bridal party came in and light the wax candles in the windows.

Now, that hour that Billy had to wait before the wedding began was an awful experience to that

poor boy and to his dear mother and to two or three others sitting near, for pretty soon both of Billy's feet went fast asleep. By dint of swinging and kicking he got them waked up again, and then his ankles and legs began to itch. When he had scratched and scratched these enough, his hips began to tickle, and such a wriggling and wriggling an old maid school-teacher who sat just behind "never saw nor heard of before." The tickle then moved up to his lower ribs, and he was just about to give one of his wildest and most consoling yells when a gentleman in a swallow-tailed coat walked in and began to light the wax candles. Billy's uneasy symptoms began immediately to subside.

When the candles were all lighted and the gas was slightly lowered at the big valve behind the door in the vestibule, a wonderful calm settled over the audience, the pipe organ began the wedding march, and the first bridal couples began their slow, graceful march down the aisles. One passed Billy's seat, but he saw them for only an instant. He could not tell whence they came nor whither they went. He could not see far enough, for he was too small. Another passed and another, but Billy had lost interest in the whole thing and sought amusement in another direction. About the time he heard the minister in solemn tones say, "Dearly beloved, we are gathered here," he

glanced up to the wax candles burning just above his head and began to think vaguely that one of the candles was slightly scorching the graceful folds of the lace curtain just above it. He watched it for a moment or two, and was sure of it. About the time he heard the minister say, "Benjamin, wilt thou have this woman for thy wedded wife?" the stillness in the church being almost oppressive, Billy reached over and whispered a loud "Marma!" But his dear mamma only nudged him in the side with her right elbow and said, "Shut up your mouth!" as quick as if it were one word.

Billy looked up at the curtain again and saw that it was much yellower from the scorching light than before. He began to get a little scared, and, leaning over again, whispered, "M-a-r-m-a," just as the preacher was saying: "Merina, wilt thou have this man for thy wedded husband?" "I'll box your ears if you open your mouth again!" said Billy's mother, and then Billy saw that if the occasion was saved he would have to do it all by himself. So he decided to push the whole candelabra to the other side and thus relieve the scorching situation. So, as the preacher began to say, "Forasmuch as Benjamin and Merina have consented together in holy wedlock," Billy pushed the candelabra about two inches farther to the left and looked quickly at

his mother. Now, poor little boy, he didn't know the other side had been scorching too, and, like many other folks, he could not comprehend the far-reaching effect of an innocent act—on the other side. So after the push he simply looked at his mother, for she might slap him. He remembered hearing the minister say, "I pronounce you man and wife together;" but after that Billy's mind was greatly confused, and even to this day he has no clear idea of all that happened. Some one yelled "Fire!" and all around Billy became bright. A strange crackling and roaring noise sounded in his ears, two or three little shreds of fire dropped on his sleeve, his mother grabbed him and ran out in the aisle, and then pandemonium broke loose. The lace curtains were in a blaze that reached up to the ceiling and spread out up there for twenty feet. The aisles were full of struggling, screaming, fainting women and men. Some one in the vestibule, thinking the gas light was setting fire to the building, turned the great valve around, shutting off the light. Such a stampede one cares not to see again. In the terror and confusion the bride and groom were separated, and did not get back together for thirty minutes, when the best man handed her over unhurt to the groom on the outside of the church. Well, in two minutes the lace curtains were completely burned up and the fire was out, for the

woodwork did not catch, although the paint on the window frame was blistered and discolored. When the fire was no more and the excitement had subsided, it was found that only a few were hurt, and none of them seriously.

Some said they were sure that Walt Howell had something to do with it, to break up the wedding, but Miss Sara said: "Ef he did, he failed, fer I heard the preacher pronounce 'em man and wife before they yelled 'Fire!'" Billy settled the whole thing at school the next day when he said: "Ef it hadn't ter been fer me, the whole thing, house and all, would er burnt up, fer I saw it a-catchin' and pushed the candlestick over to the other side."

PINEY ON A RAMPAGE.

TWO young business men, drummers for Nashville wholesale houses, drove their spirited team of bay horses down the banks and over the graveled roadway to the crystal waters of Piney Creek, in Hickman County, Tenn., one sultry afternoon in July. Lowering the checkreins, they drove knee-deep into the cool waters, where the thirsty horses, plunging in, mouths, noses, and all, halfway up to their eyes, began to slake their thirst as though they were half famished. After the horses had drunk all they wanted, since the young men were in no hurry, they let the team stand in the refreshing stream and paw and switch with their long, silken tails until the water was all over their panting sides. While this was going on they noticed for the first time an old gray-haired colored man, with hoe in hand, leaning on the top of a rail fence that inclosed a potato patch where he had been at work. The old man was contemplating them with much interest, and seemed to mark the team of horses with special approval.

"Been hard at work, have you, old man?" kindly inquired one of the drummers.

"Yes, sir; the ole man has to work mighty hard

to keep him an' ole Miss an' all dese chillern in bread to eat an' clothes to w'ar; has to work mighty hard, sir, mighty hard."

"How many hours do you work during the day?"

"I work twenty-four hours, sir, out of every

"I wishes . . . I could he'p de ole 'oman dar some."

day, an' sometimes I wishes dar wuz two more hours in de day, so I could he'p de ole 'oman dar some."

"But there are only twenty-four hours in the day. Don't you sleep any?" asked one drummer, greatly amused.

"O yes, sir," said the old negro. "I sleeps a

plenty, sir, I sleeps a plenty. I sleeps all de time I am not at work, sir; I sleeps a plenty."

"What creek is this?" inquired the other drummer.

"Dis? Law, boss, don't you know what creek dis is? Whar you been raised at and whar you live?" asked the negro in astonishment.

"I was reared in Lebanon and I live in Nashville. I have never been here before in my life. Tell me the name of this creek."

"Why, boss, dis here creek is Piney. Piney Creek is de purtiest creek an' has de cl'arest water an' de fertilest lan' I ever see, an' de finest folks you ever seed live right here on Piney. Look like ever'body oughter know Piney."

"Well," apologetically replied one young man, "you see we have never been in this part of the country before, and know nothing of the beauties and advantages of this lovely place."

"Den you never seed Piney on a rampage, den, is yer?"

"No; we never saw Piney except as it is now, sweet and cool and clear and peaceful."

"Well, sir, you oughter see Piney git on a rampage once. Den all dem purty words you jist now said will go out uv your mouth sho'; for she has a temper an' she shows it sometimes, an' she gits red in de face an' den black as de ole 'oman dar, an' she do damage 'fore she cools down, too."

Scenting a good story, one young man said: "Tell us about the time Piney got on a rampage last."

"Well, hit wuz de fust day uv las' June, an' I wuz a-hoein' dese very same 'taters in dis very patch, an' wuz not a-thinkin' 'bout a thing on earth. It wuz hot, it wuz sho' hot; hot enough to melt de icin' off de cake an' fry chicken on de roof, an' still a-moderatin' hotter every minute. Well, sir, as I said, I wuz a-hoein' dese 'taters when all ter once dar come a loud clap er thunder right over dar by dat bluff, an' I look up an' see a dark cloud up in de sky 'bout as big as a acre. I kept on a-hoein', an' another clap er thunder louder'n the fust come, an' I looked up an' dat cloud wuz five times as big as it wuz when it thundered before. Den I hear a big drap er rain strike right in de top er dat beech tree dar, an' come a-rattlin' an' a-patterin' cl'ar down through to the ground, whar it landed on a 'tater leaf an' splashed all around. Den I heard two draps more, den I hear a dozen, an' den it begin ter rain like all fury all over de world. I tell you, sir, I never seed such a rain in all my life. Why, sir, fust it begin ter rain like so many cords reachin' up ter heaven; den dese change into buggy whips an' hoe handles an' broom handles an' pitchfork handles, an' den it began ter come down like pick handles an' ax handles an' wagon spokes.

Den dar come another clap er thunder dat most jarred de ole 'oman's last two teeth out, an' a hard puff o' wind; an', sir, dat rain rolled itself up into saw logs an' spread itself out into sheets an' blankets an' kiverin's uv rain dat flopped on de earth and stayed dar in layers an' kiverin's an' piles uv water. I never seed such a sight. I dunno why I done it, but I turned and looked up Piney, an' what you reckon I seed? Just a few minutes before, sir, Piney wuz as peaceful an' ca'm as she is right now, sparklin' an' a-jumpin' an' a-playin' right along dar, like a child dat its mother just bathe and put a clean dress on. Yes, sir, she had been a-crawlin' lazy along, like a gray snake after dinner, when all at once as I look up-stream she fairly grew black in de face an' come a-jumpin' an' a-prancin' along like de Ole Scratch wuz in her. In two jumps she wuz over dat bridge, an' she whirl an' swirl an' roared wid a deep bass tone dat sounded like all de men in de bad place wuz a-singin' a song uv sorrow. She knocked down fences like straws an' bore ten acres uv fence rails on her bosom. By an' by here comes a barn a-floatin' down, standin' high outen de water, like ole Piney wuz tryin' to hand it to yer. Den a house an' some sheep come by. Den a whole beech tree dat had been uprooted by de roots, come a-turnin' an' a-twistin' down-stream like hit wuz runnin' a race fer a prize.

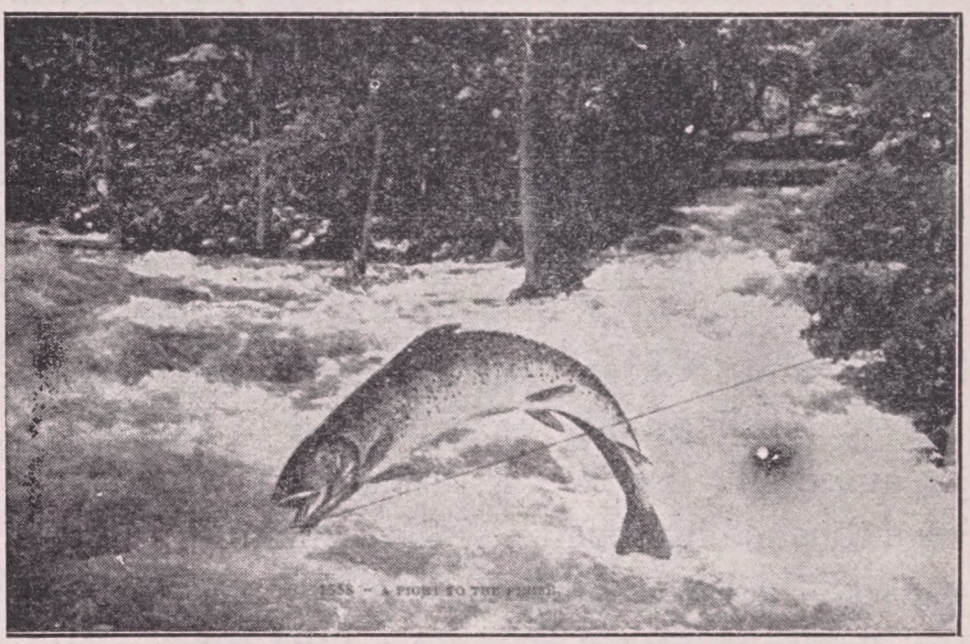
From hill to hill ole Piney spread out her black face, an' never stop her eatin' up things till everything in reach wuz gone. Den she begin ter grow quiet again. Dat, sir, wuz de las' time old Piney git on a rampage, an' she sho' made her mark on de world. But next mornin' she wuz as ca'm an' clear an' peaceful as she is right now. All de roar wuz gone an' de anger wuz hid, an' wave wuz whisperin' to wave wid as tender a murmur as a turtledove ever cooed ter its mate, an' de little waterfalls wuz reachin' dar arms aroun' de rocks an' turf as lovin' as a boy wid his fust sweetheart. Yes, sir, dis is Piney. Don't forgit dat. An' dat wuz de time ole Piney git on a rampage sho'."

OLD SHINEY, THE GIANT TROUT.

IT was rarely any one's good fortune to see him, but many came very near it at times, so it was said. Old Shiney was a giant trout that lived in the blue waters of the lazy Minnewaska River, near Hosale's Mill. He was actually seen but a few times each season, had been hooked many times, but always with a disdainful flip of the tail had run off with hook, sinker, float, and all. As the years went by, Old Shiney became bolder and bolder, and took special delight in straightening out some fisherman's No. 4 Carlisle or snapping a Japanese silk line like a thread of tow that had been touched by the fire. Many an angry "I'll get you yet" had been hurled at him when somebody's reel would suddenly start up a wild song, a steel rod would bend nearly double, and a line that had been tested up to eighteen pounds, dead lift, would become as taut as a steel wire—all followed by a sickening "snap" as Old Shiney would make off downstream, swelling up wavelets that reached from shore to shore.

In fact, Old Shiney had become very careless about himself. He had been in so many escapades since his career began as a tiny minnow and had borne such a charmed life that nothing seemed

to daunt him. He would flap himself across a shallow shoal after a peculiarly tasty minnow, when not one-third of his body would be submerged. He would propel and wedge himself into a hole in the bank after his prey until it was only with the greatest difficulty that he could



OLD SHINEY.

extricate himself. He would follow a glistening carp, his favorite food, for hours until he could get it cornered, and with a gulp deposit it in his capacious stomach. He had been grabbed after, shot at, angled for, hunted, longed for year after year, but all to no avail. Not less than fifteen hooks had been fastened in his mouth with more or less line attached to each one, and some of these had caused Old Shiney much trouble. But

he had learned how to do in these latter days. He would calmly wait until the place had festered and was soft, and then go deliberately to where some tough river moss grew, get the hook fastened in that, and gently work it out. Of course he knew that he was smart and strong, and thought he could not be taken; and so he went on and on, and it seemed that his estimate of himself was true.

Twice he came near meeting his fate before his ignominious end did come. One of these happened a little after daylight one quiet May morning while he was idly floating near some turbulent rapids where he hoped to secure his breakfast. A glistening minnow was sporting where the rough water began, and Old Shiney was just waiting for it to get far enough from the shallow water for him to make a rush upon it. Old Shiney was careless, as usual, intent on his prey, one keen eye watching the minnow, and thinking himself as sufficiently hidden from all observation as he was from the little fish. But up at the summit of a lofty cliff overhanging the river two other eyes were watching him with great intentness. To make it all the more dangerous, three little wide-opened mouths were pointed up to the mother eagle, and their faint screaming urged her downward. Her little babies were hungry, and she must procure food for

them. At last the proper moment came, when, with a dart so quick that the eye could not follow her, she descended to the river right upon Old Shiney. He saw his danger, but moved lazily. Was he not strong? Had he not faced this thing before? Besides, the minnow was almost where he wanted him. But the shadow of this bird was larger than the others. Really, he had better hurry to deep water. But the eagle was upon him, gripping around his glistening sides with talons as sharp and strong as Carlisle hooks, and with a great effort the eagle actually lifted his twelve pounds clear out of the water. But that eagle did not know Old Shiney. Other fish had been paralyzed as soon as her talons had encircled them, and without a struggle they had been killed at the eagle's nest and their flesh torn into shreds and dropped down the throats of the hungry eaglets. Fear and pain, however, lent energy to Old Shiney's struggles, which were so great that one talon came loose, and then with a great flap of his tail the trout shook himself free and dropped back into deep water with a splash, followed not the thousandth of a second later by the eagle, intent on his recapture. All in vain, however, for in a minute the trout was safely hidden in the narrow cave between two rocks in ten feet of water where he made his home.

The other narrow escape Old Shiney had was

after Squire Munfin saw him break up a young fisherman's angling outfit and go off with thirty feet of line, swelling waves ten inches high in his retreat. The Squire ordered from Chicago a special reel and three hundred feet of line that had been tested up to thirty pounds. This outfit cost him twenty-seven dollars. He caught a young carp weighing one-quarter of a pound and attached it to a large Carlisle hook. He embarked in a canoe and had a man row him gently to and fro a dozen times near the place where Old Shiney made his home. That overconfident gentleman saw the carp several times and wondered at the way it was acting; but he was not hungry that morning, and was lazy and sleepy. Once he started to take it in, but closed his eyes and let it go, mentally resolving that if that carp came that way again it would be the last of it. In ten minutes it was back again, going the other way. Old Shiney was nettled and insulted. "That fish wants to be swallowed, I guess," said he, and in a moment he hurled himself upon it. A brief struggle, and down his throat went the carp. But that old, familiar pricking of his mouth, followed by the slight checking of his onward motion, a jerk, and Old Shiney knew that he was in for another fight. The old Squire let him have fully two hundred feet of line before he began to check him. Such a song his reel never sang be-

fore. The whizzing wheels threw off sparks of electric fire, and the old Squire knew, just knew he had him. When the reel stopped, the line grew slack and the fisherman began reeling in with all his might. Then came another jerk that snatched the ivory handle of the reel from the Squire's hand as the fish took a new tack. Then another long wait with a slack line as Old Shiney swam as far as he could in another direction, followed by such another jerk as almost pulled the pole and all out of the fisherman's hand. The trout was experiencing the hardest fight of his life. He was caught, and he knew it. But the battle was not over. An old root with rough edges, rising just six inches from the river bottom, caught his eye. With all his last remaining strength he made for it, got under it, scraped the line against it, gave it one last, despairing jerk with all his strength, and was free! The old Squire told a dozen people that Old Shiney weighed at least twenty pounds.

It is now necessary to chronicle the ignominious end of poor Old Shiney, a hero of a hundred battles and the gamest fish of the Minnewaska. It is done with genuine sadness. It happened this way: Judge Corlette and Colonel Themps came to the river for a three days' fish when the red-horse were on the shoal. Each had jeweled reels, steel rods, and fine tackle—about one hundred and

fifty dollars' worth of beautiful fishing paraphernalia. They fished and fished, but caught absolutely nothing. On the third day, as both were leaning out of the window of the mill gazing pensively at the other shore, they saw a plowboy on a flop-eared mule emerge from the undergrowth on the other side and make for the brink of the river for the mule to drink. The boy gazed with intense interest into the turbid waters beneath the dam, and, suddenly slipping off his mule, repaired to the bushes, from which he soon returned with a long hickory sprout for a pole and a piece of an old trot-line with a hook at the end that would hold a small whale. He took a piece of bacon from his dinner bucket, baited the hook, and threw it with a splash into the river. In about ten minutes there was a jerk that almost pulled the boy into the stream; but without any ceremony he turned and ran up the bank with all his strength, and on the gravel of the beautiful Minnewaska, flopping in utter helplessness, soon lay Old Shiney. The Judge and the Colonel saw the boy string him, adjust him to the hames of the mule, mount, and ride away. Poor old Judge! Poor old Colonel! Three hundred dollars' worth of tackle, three days' hard work, and not a nibble! Poor Old Shiney, hero, veteran, and beauty! A plowboy with three cents' worth of tackle your captor! You deserved a better fate.

THE BEGINNING OF THE BIG FLAT REVIVAL.

THE proverbial elderly inhabitant could not remember when things were in so distressing a state as they were in Big Flat at the time our story begins. In the first place, nearly all the fine old families had either died out or moved away. Those that had come in were of an "inferior breed, common and worthless," as old Miss Susan Hightower described them with a curl of the lip. The personnel of the membership of the Big Flat Church had suffered in a corresponding way. There were not half a dozen left that cared at all for the Church. One-half the membership stayed away from church because somebody had said something about them or about their little boy or girl or old bony horse or weedy crop or something else. The other half came very irregularly because the house was so cold or so hot, or the sermon was so long and dull, or the preacher so shabby or looked ill or had a long face, or because no one shook hands with them and welcomed them to church, or other things too numerous and ridiculous to mention, even if paper were ten times as cheap as it is. The boards on the roof of the church were old and rotten, cov-

ered with moss, and leaked badly when it rained. Several window lights were out, and the stove and stovepipe were bad. On a cold day, when the stove was fired up a little more than usual, it smoked so that one wished all the lights were out; and when the windows were raised to let out the smoke, one nearly froze to death. So between the cold and the smoke one wanted to be at home. The floor had not received any sweeping in a year. Weeds seven feet high grew in the churchyard, contesting stubbornly with the feet of the worshipers for the tiny path from the gate to the door. The fence was about one-half down, its prostration having begun when Jimmie Gilbert hitched his two-year-old colt inside the yard, which, taking fright one windy Sunday when Miss Susan's sunbonnet blew off of her head and over on the colt's neck, broke loose and ran through one corner. Up to the time of writing Jimmie had never repaired it, nor was a writ requiring him to do so ever served on him.

The circuit rider—poor, dear Brother Carroll! —was now serving them for the third year. When he first came and looked the field over, he had an attack of heart failure, so to speak, for which he could not be blamed. At the beginning of the last year the stewards, with the most doleful prognostications of failure and many plaints on the heaviness of the financial burdens, cut the

already insufficient and insignificant salary from three hundred dollars to two hundred and eighty-one. On the very day that prissy little Lizzie Lee Slebbins said that "all of Brother Carroll's sermons were so dull and that he dressed so shabbily and looked so sick at the stomach and always carried around such a long face," the preacher's little boy, Vernon, was hovering between life and death with typhoid fever. There was not a dollar in the house, and the food was nearly all gone.

Now, the philosophic historian that traced all the causes back to the very beginning, humanly speaking, in accounting for the Big Flat revival is positive that the tiniest drip marking the very headwaters of that mighty stream fell just here, although there were unquestionably three sources. Other inflowing streams in a little while increased the dimensions to such an extent that now, after twenty years, men still wonder at its force and reach. It was this way: Mary Haines, the loveliest little girl in all the valley, came on her gentle pony in the afternoon to the preacher's home to make kindly inquiries of the very sick child. As her hand was raised to knock gently on the front door, and before a knuckle had touched the wood, she heard a sad, low voice from the sick room say: "Martha, do you know that if our little Vernon should die I would not have a decent shirt to wear to his funeral?" After this sentence

was spoken, Mary's little white hand hung suspended for two full minutes before the knock was sounded.

A second source was the thought that happened to strike Mrs. Lottie Kepler while on a visit up in the big city. She walked into a bookstore and said to the proprietor: "Our minister was so good to us when our little boy was ill, and spoke such sweet words when we buried him, that I want to buy him an appropriate gift." The bookman recommended Farrar's "Life of Christ." "For," said he, "everybody wants to know about Christ. When a preacher preaches Jesus, the people listen."

Still another source of the revival appeared about that time at the home of some newcomers, common folks, who were not members of the Church. The muscular, hard-working son of the household, eighteen years of age, said to his mother: "I was at the church last Sunday, and the dirt was half an inch deep all over the floor. I believe I will go down there and sweep out just for fun, and see what folks will say."

. . . . . .

The presiding elder was slowly making his way down the steep hill into the valley of the Big Flat two weeks after the time that our story began. He was on his way to a distant Quarterly Conference when he overtook two men on

horseback and heard the following conversation between them:

"You should have heard that preacher last Sunday morning. I did not aim to go to church that day, but I saw that young Overton Saturday afternoon sweeping out the church and raising a monstrous cloud of dust, so I decided that something must be to play and I went. The first time I ever walked on that floor without hearing the gravel crunch under by feet was on that day. Such a sense of cleanliness crept over me that I grew rested right straight. When the preacher got off of his horse, I could see that something had happened to him, but I could not tell just what it was. He looked cleaner and neater and was better groomed. He did not seem to be apologizing for being there or for being alive. He walked straight into the pulpit, gave out a hymn, started it himself, and everybody joined in. The biggest crowd was present that I ever saw there, for word had somehow got out all over the neighborhood that that young Overton had swept out the church, and that Mary Haines had raised the money herself and bought the preacher two nice shirts. The preacher took for his text, 'Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me,' and such a sermon I never heard in all my life. He said the trouble with many people is that they don't understand the Lord and don't try. They

judge the Lord with feeble sense that cannot see beyond the nearest hill. They charge him with what he is not responsible for, make up a verdict after every adverse witness, and go off instead of coming to church. Then they read infidel books instead of the Bible, and follow Tom Paine over the jumping-off place. He said that if people could have seen Jesus stretch out his hands toward Jerusalem and heard him say 'O!' could have seen his tears and caught the love in his voice, they never again would charge God foolishly. I tell you that got me. For you know I buried my wife and baby fourteen years ago, and I then and there lost faith in God and man. After that there has been nothing too hard for me to say, and I have been unhappy and wandering around in a maze ever since. Well, the preacher went on to say that if we could have seen Christ in Gethsemane praying all alone in the darkness with his disciples asleep, if we could have seen the tears and bloody sweat and heard him say, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will,' it would break our hearts and we would never complain of our Maker again, but would renew our covenant, live faithfully, and meet our loved ones in heaven. When he said that, I could not keep my seat any longer. I rose up and stopped him and said: 'Brother, you are preaching all that sermon to me. I own up. I want to renew my

covenant with God. I see it all now as I have never seen it before.' Just about that time my heart exploded with joy, and I do not know what else I did until I came to myself, shaking hands with old McWright. You know I hadn't spoken to him for twelve years, since we all thought he fired my barn. Yes, sir, I had old McWright by the hand, and he was crying and saying he was so glad that I had found out it wasn't him; and then the whole crowd went at it like a prairie fire. Six or eight men were converted right there.

"When the meeting was over that day, some of the boys got together and decided to come to the church the next day with plenty of boards and nails and tools and put a new roof on. Bill Hightower said that if they would do that he would take it on himself to fix the fence, and old Howard Calkings brought a load of hitching posts and set them round about the church. In two days they had fixed things all up around there so you would not know the place, and the meeting is still going on. They say these new converts, of which there have been over two hundred, don't compare with the fine old ones that died; but the gospel made the others the 'fine old ones' that they were, and I guess it can make these fine, too. All the other Churches on the circuit are clamoring for their meet-

ings to begin. One of the strangest things that happened during the meeting was when old Sol Epping got religion. He, together with three hands, stopped by the church on his way from cutting oats on a steep hillside. All got religion before they left, and, after the benediction, they cut all the weeds down in the yard and raked them outside. Then Jerry McWithers, the Irishman, set to and whitewashed the church and fence, and I don't know to-day of a sweeter or dearer spot on earth than the old Big Flat Church. I tell you when Almighty God does begin to give he gives mighty quick, and he gives the best that the universe affords."

Just here the three parted company. A mile farther on the presiding elder drove up behind a spring wagon loaded with a miscellaneous collection of bags and bundles. The wagon was driven by a stalwart, fine young fellow, and was preceded by the loveliest little girl in all the valley riding on a gentle pony. The face of the young fellow wore a continuous smile as he talked to her along the way, and there was more than an ordinary interest in her countenance as she turned her head now and then to reply. The presiding elder caught but a few words of the conversation, some of which were the following:

"Won't Brother Carroll be surprised when we drive up to his gate with this load of good things, Miss Mary?"

"Yes, Mr. Overton; but I wish we could make our contribution twice as great."

BANDY'S BAD BREAK.

BANDY JAMES was a great man in his own estimation. What he did not know and could not do were too insignificant to mention. His vociferous manner of asserting his remarkable superiority was so overwhelming that all contradiction was instantly silenced. This, Bandy thought, was proof positive of his mental acumen; whereas the truth was that others of a finer fiber would not descend to a discussion in which so much of objectionable manner and personal coarseness were injected. So Bandy would strut and boast loudly and long of the time when he "did up" so and so. He once said that he had forgotten more than Willis Hunt ever knew, and had never forgotten anything in his life.

But what he *had* done and *could* do were nothing to what he would have done if he had been there or would do if such and such things were to occur. The men and boys he would have whipped, cut, and shot under certain circumstances would have almost depopulated many sections of the country.

If a new house were being built in the community, it mattered not how beautiful the plan or how well the work was being done, Bandy

had criticisms by the yard to lay up against it. The roof was not shaped right, the porches were too wide or not wide enough, the paint colors did not match, the ceilings were too high, the lumber was not suitable, and so on.

If a man had a new suit, he simply would not meet Bandy, for his remarks would surely put a bad taste in his mouth, and he would never like his suit so well afterwards. "Why do not people ask *me* about things?" he wondered. He would set them straight and prevent many needless errors. In fact, it was perfectly plain to all beholders that Bandy considered himself the general setter-to-rights man of the neighborhood, and he regarded it as an indication of the purblind perversity of the neighborhood that people did not consult him and be guided by his superior taste and experience.

Now, Bandy was a chicken fancier, and made it perfectly plain to all listeners, far and near, that no other brand of feathered fowl was to be compared to the peculiar strain he raised. His chickens grew faster, ate less food, required less attention, were hardier, healthier, prettier, and in every sense more desirable than those of any of his neighbors. Right here Bandy had a lesson taught him that he never forgot. It also marked the headwater of his long and painful course of recovery. It was this way: Modest and diffident

little Mrs. Vell was describing to a lady friend in the hearing of Bandy one day a toothsome baked Plymouth Rock hen that had graced her table the day before. That gentleman broke into the conversation with: "Now, if that had been one of *my* Rhode Island Reds you had on your table, you might have had some room to talk. There is no chicken that compares to them in any sense; in fact, after eating a well-baked Rhode Island Red hen no one with any taste for chicken at all will ever want any other kind. Why, do you know that if a Rhode Island Red and any other kind of fowl were baked just alike and put on a dish together, I could tell which was which just by eating a slice cut from their breasts?" All this was spoken in the loud, bullying tones peculiar to the said Bandy.

Quite a little company had gathered around by this time, and heard the following proposition from the gentle Mrs. Vell: "Now, Bandy, I doubt your ability to distinguish by taste the difference between the fowls mentioned"—

"I can, though, and don't you forget it," interrupted Bandy.

"But, as I said, I doubt it"—

"Well, you needn't," again broke in the self-assertive Bandy.

"But I do," persisted the little lady, "and I

will give you a chance to prove your assertion. You send me to-morrow one of your hens and I will furnish another. Two baked hens will be placed on the table, and all of you come to my house to dinner."

It was agreed and the group separated. The next day at noon all were assembled around Mrs. Vell's hospitable board. When they were seated, the large china dish was brought in containing two fine, fat hens of equal size, done to a turn, steaming hot and inviting piercing fork and glittering blade. Around the stump of one chicken's leg there had been tied a double bowknot of white silk ribbon as a distinguishing mark, but *which* variety it marked of course no one knew but the hostess. A fragrant slice was carefully cut from each plump breast and passed to Bandy, while all the company in breathless expectancy awaited the result. Some thought he might distinguish between them; others thought he might guess right. Most of them watched the performance with incredulous smiles, and ate nothing while awaiting the verdict.

Bandy cut a liberal mouthful from one piece, tasted it with a critical air, chewed it up, and finally swallowed it, bringing his chin hard down to his Adam's apple in doing so. The people waited. A liberal cut was then taken from the other piece, and the same process was gone

through with. In a moment Bandy was ready with his decision, which, if wrong, he intended to bully through as at other times; for with this gentleman, I am sorry to say, a falsehood well stuck to was as good as the truth.

"That chicken," said he, "which has the ribbon on its legs is the one I sent you, if no mistake has been made in informing me which piece was cut from it."

All assured him that no mistake had been made.

"Are you very, very sure, Bandy, that the hen with the ribbon around its legs is the one you sent me? In fact," continued the little Mrs. Vell, "if you are not perfectly sure, just take your own good time and be sure before you decide. Here," said she to the one that carved the chicken, "cut Bandy some more chicken, a piece from each fowl, and be sure you let him know of a certainty which is which."

It was done, and again Bandy tasted the two baked hens, going through the process with even more deliberation than before. His decision was unhesitatingly given as formerly.

"You are sure, Bandy?"

"Yes, sure; there can be no mistake," replied that gentleman. "I would know that flavor if I tasted it in a packing house."

"All right," said the hostess. "O Tildy, Tildy,"

to the cook, "bring that basket on the kitchen table."

In came Tildy with Bandy's covered basket, unopened and containing his Rhode Island Red hen, just as he had brought it, alive and well.

THE FIGHT AT RAINBOW FALLS.

TWO of the finest boys in the village of Salida were Henry Embry and Willis Hodges. Each just sixteen, handsome and polite, they were more greatly beloved than any other boys in the city. Henry was tall, with deep-brown eyes and black hair, the leader in his classes at school and the idol of his household. Willis was of a lighter complexion, with gray eyes, and the character of a gentleman was stamped in every fiber of his being. It seemed that these two young fellows were made for each other, and that between them would be that firm friendship which continues with manly young men through life. But such was not the case. They would pass and repass without speaking, and never had been known to have anything to do with each other. If Henry arrived on the ground first and was already in a game of ball, Willis would stand around a little while, look on with no interest, and then leave. If Willis was on the ground first and was playing, Henry would do likewise. They had never had an open clash, and really had nothing against each other, but regarded each other with suspicion and associated with different companions. Their friends were aware of this

strange lack of friendship and the causes that led up to it. Their fathers had been reared together and were once the closest friends; in fact, no closer friendship had ever existed in Salida than that between Colonel Embry and Mr. Hodges. An unfortunate incident had separated them, it seemed forever, and now they had nothing whatever to do with each other. And, as is so frequently the case when two friends become estranged, it seemed that a hundred things happened to drive them farther apart and make their enmity complete. They were too high-toned to take advantage of each other or knowingly cause one another trouble, yet things were constantly happening to produce this very thing. Somehow if Colonel Embry supported Squire Holcomb for magistrate, Mr. Hodges was for Sam Haven. Both learned, about the same time one morning, that while one had invested fifty thousand dollars in the Cascade Irrigation Company for the development of eighty thousand acres of arid land in the Squeeze Valley, and had been elected President of the concern, the other had invested twenty-five thousand dollars in the Cactus Ledge Investment Company, a rival corporation organized for the same purpose, and had been elected Chairman of the Executive Committee. Thus it had gone on for years, from bad to worse; and the enmity of Henry and Willis, their two sons, had been in-

herited entirely. It is very easy for a boy to inherit his father's enmities and prejudices.

One day news was brought to Henry that some mountain lions were committing depredations among some sheep that his father had away back of Yoho Mountain, not far from Devil's Slide, where large forests of fir and clear cedar extended far up the mountain side. Obtaining permission from his father to go hunting over there, he put his trusted repeating rifle in good shape and, with two unfailing pistols and a hunting knife buckled around his waist, with ample ammunition, camp equipage, and a Chinaman as cook and companion, set out for a week's stay. They took the northwest trail. About nine o'clock the next morning they established their camp at the edge of the dense woods at the base of old Yoho, near where a plunging little mountain torrent came foaming and roaring down the slope, as clear as crystal and icy cold, from the melting snows above.

Not knowing of this, Willis obtained permission from his father to spend several days at Rainbow Falls, west of Yoho, hunting and fishing. So, in company with Ned, the faithful hired man of his father, he took the southwest trail around the mountain; and after a day's ride they pitched their tent near where the silvery spray of Rainbow Falls molded globes of dew on the red and

RAINBOW FALLS.

pink mountain flowers every hour of the day and night. Three sparkling trout from the brook and a broiled young squirrel afforded them a delight-

ful lunch at noon, and soon enough game was in their cache to last a week.

Sometime during the night Willis and Ned were awakened by the hideous and frightful screaming of half a dozen mountain lions not far away. The camp fire was replenished and guns made ready. No more sleep for them that night. Next morning an investigation in the direction of the screaming revealed the bones and wool of some half-devoured sheep that the beasts had been making merry over the night before. Instinctively Willis looked to the loading of his rifle and pistols, and walked with greater watchfulness; for these huge beasts would leap upon a man from the bough of a tree above his head, hurl him to the ground, and kill him in a flash with gleaming teeth and tearing paw. A little farther journey, and a subdued scream and some angry growling told him that large game was close by. He proceeded with the greatest caution and came to a spot near a huge fir tree where a tangled swinging vine and some young trees made a natural bower of observation. Into this he crawled to observe and listen. The growling and screaming continued and seemed to be coming nearer. Over on the right also, from the crackling of the twigs, he knew that some other animal was advancing from that direction. As he watched on the left and listened to the right two

lithe, tawny forms emerged from the undergrowth and came into full view, one with a bone and some torn flesh in its mouth, the other snapping and snarling for a portion of it. The noise of approaching footsteps on the right increased, and suddenly, before Willis could fire on the lions, they had heard the sound and leaped to the strong limbs of the tree above his head. Two or three more noiseless leaps, and they had advanced to the side whence the footsteps were heard and were making ready to spring upon the victim as soon as it appeared. Before Willis could draw a bead on the first lion, the hand of a man was advanced through the undergrowth and a familiar form, all unaware of any danger, stepped cautiously out into the little open space. Willis's heart stood still as he recognized the newcomer as Henry Embry, all unaware of the death hovering fifteen feet above his head. As Willis glanced upward he saw both lions ready to spring. He drew a hasty bead upon the one nearest to Henry, and as he pulled the trigger both lions leaped like tawny shadows through the air, and boy and beast went down together, all mixed up in a struggle that was to be to the death. Willis instantly saw that his shot had been effective with one beast, for it rolled, kicking and snapping, off to one side in the throes of death. The other, however, unharmed, had struck its prey true and

was recovering itself to put a quick end to the fight by sticking its vicious teeth into the throat of its victim and sucking his lifeblood away. Willis could not fire again, the boy and beast being in such close proximity that to do so might mean death to both. So drawing his keen hunting knife, he fought hand-to-hand with the lion to the death. A fortunate plunge of the knife into the vitals of the animal ended the conflict, and Willis was helping the badly injured Henry to his feet and binding up his painful cuts and bruises.

After the many questions had been answered and full explanations made, the two boys set out for Willis's camp, it being the nearer. After two hours of association together, each discovered that the other was just the friend he had been looking for.

Henry said: "Willis, if it had not been for your courage and skill, I would be dead at this minute. I owe my very existence to you. If I have ever said or done one single thing to you that you did not like, I hope you will forgive me."

Willis said: "I have acted the fool long enough. The rest of my life will be spent in avoiding enmities and making peace between men."

Both agreed that the next step for them to take was to bring their fathers back into friendly

relations, and a plan looking to this end was earnestly sought. An unusual incident solved the problem. A little growling and barking at the entrance of a cave on their way home attracted their attention, and on investigation they discovered two little bear cubs, hungry and calling for food. They fed them, took them up in their arms, and put out for Salida as fast as they could go. On their arrival they went into the back office of the Salida Bank and Trust Company, and, explaining it to the cashier, secured his assistance to their plan. Urgent notes were written to Colonel Embry and Mr. Hodges that two individuals from Yoho, with strange stories to tell, wanted their presence in exactly fifteen minutes. At the end of that time the two gentlemen were ushered into the presence of their sons and the little bear cubs. The story was quickly told by the grateful Henry, and as the fathers grasped hands (the first time in twenty years) Willis said: "Here is a little present we have brought for you both. This bear we want *you* to have, papa, and his name is Bear."

"This one we want *you* to have, papa," said Henry, "and his name is Forbear. With these two bears in any home, peace can never leave."

AN EFFECTIVE CURE; OR, NEARLY A TRAGEDY.

THE consequences of thoughtless deeds are startling; the cure of unwholesome habits is often tragic. Blessed is that boy who, early in a career of wrong, is suspended above one of the chasms of iniquity and measures its depths or receives a stinging rebuke that he cannot forget as a penalty for misdoing. Many men continue in sin in spite of common sense, warning tones, and terrible results, until the full sweep of the besom of destruction fairly lays them out, when, broken, sore, shamed, and bloody, they quit forever. Why do you suppose they wait so long? It seems to take the penalty of suffering in allopathic doses to break many away from deeds of wrong when the habit becomes fixed.

Cutting White was a fine young fellow in many ways. When he was converted, his friends said that a useful career was undoubtedly open for him in the Church. Others said that it would not be long before he would return to the old paths; that he was weak, had run with an indulgent crowd, and had been led to regard many wrong and shameful things as not very bad, after all. Among the bad things taught Cutting was

to drink a little intoxicant now and then; and although he never drank to excess, still he drank some wine and such things occasionally. Now, pretty soon after this young man's conversion he was called to preach—that is, he felt a thrilling impulse that his Heavenly Father wanted him to proclaim his saving truth. Brother White yielded instantly, and in an earnest way began preparation for his life work.

One day several years afterwards, together with his presiding elder, he was dining at the home of the chairman of his board of stewards. A delightful dinner had been prepared, which was discussed most heartily from entrée to dessert. By and by the attentive hostess came around with a bottle of wine and a shining glass, and pressed upon the presiding elder an invitation to partake. He declined so kindly and yet so very firmly that it was unmistakable. A little nettled, the hostess came next to her young pastor, poured out the glass of wine, almost adjusted it to his lips, and said: "I know *you* will drink some of my wine, for it will do you good." The young man declined, not so positively as his elder companion, however, and she replied: "Now, unless you drink it, I shall pour it down your collar." He took the glass and thoughtlessly drained it down his throat.

Now, Satan has a most wonderful way of connecting things together. He takes actual trans-

gressions, public opinions, and unfortunate circumstances, together with careless deeds and thoughtless words, and weaves them all together in a strong net to catch and hold tight the struggling boys and girls who, deep down in their hearts, never really meant to do wrong. And the finished warp and woof of Satan's weaving is not long in showing up its product. So it was with Cutting. The next six months were the bitterest and darkest he ever spent. Friendships were shattered, enemies became brutal, wounds were made that will never heal until the judgment day, and the unfortunate glass of wine that the young man drank figured all through it—in the press, in the courts, in the talk of the town, and everywhere.

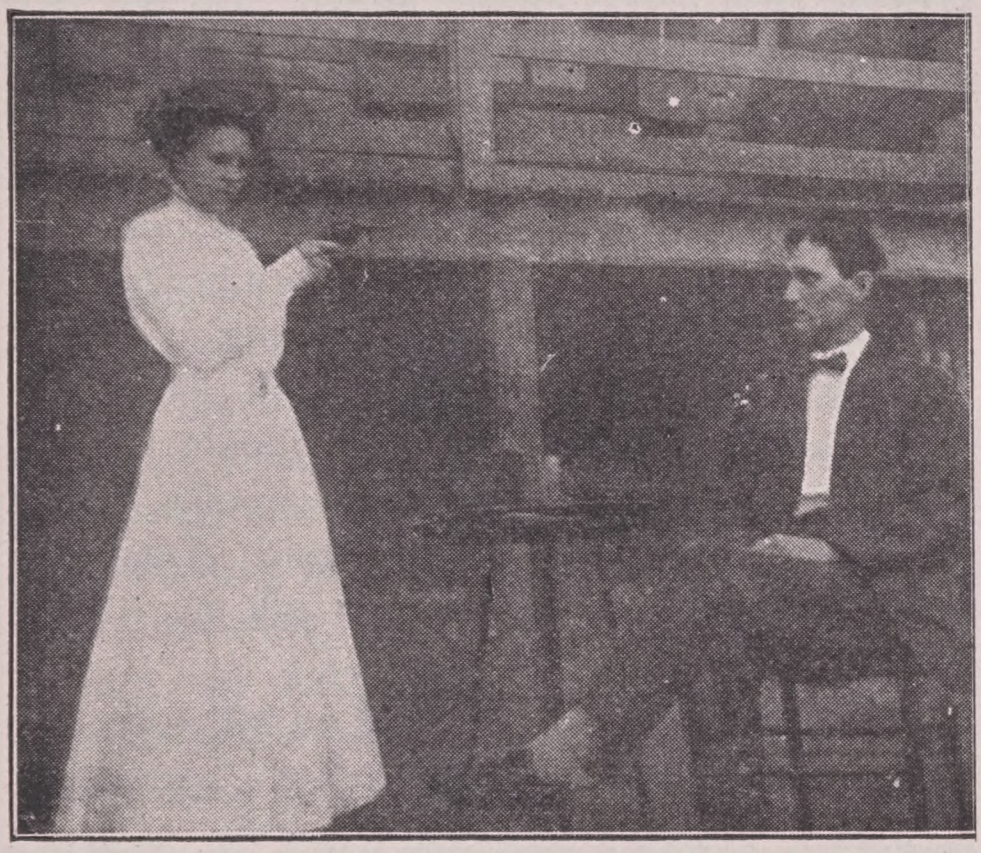
These terrible results, however, were the very medicine that this young man needed. The best school in all the world is the school of experience, but its tuition is the costliest. In it the chief motto seems to be: "A cure at any price." Properly to bring it about its pupils' bodies are maimed, heartstrings are torn, banks are wrecked, health is destroyed, and fortunes are swept away. No man in the face of eternal verities, however, should ever complain at any experience that brings him nearer to God.

The smoke of persecution finally cleared away, and we find Brother White a sad and broken-

hearted man, but much wiser, much stronger, and with finer principles than ever.

Several years passed away. Success had attended his labors. His influence was growing. Public confidence in him was great. One day a tragic incident revealed the progress that he had made and the kind of stuff that was in him. In the course of his pastoral work he was at the home of some of his members at lunch time. The gracious invitation for him to remain to lunch was extended and accepted. While being entertained previous to dinner a silly girl of the household, who at times had shown evidences of slight mental unbalance, conceived a romantic idea of "tempting the preacher," as she expressed it to another guest, to see "if he were as good as he looked." This girl slipped into the cellar, secured a bottle of wine, dust-covered and garnished with webs, drew the cork herself, and, placing bottle and glass on a tray, went unobserved into the parlor. Here with all the blandishments of which she was capable she began to urge a taste of some "sweet old wine bottled the year mamma was married." Persistent, firm refusal—for this preacher's hand had been sufficiently burned—did not seem to phase her. Finally, to settle the matter, the young man said: "If you should get a pistol and point it at my head and demand of me to drink, I would not; so now

please let me alone." Instantly he saw that he had said the wrong thing. She set the tray within reach, left the room, and returned in a few moments with an old navy six-shooter as long as your arm, loaded with cap and ball charges.



"Don't kill me; I have done you no harm."

The brass caps were shining and the buckshot stared out upon him from the loaded chambers. She deliberately cocked the weapon, pointed it in deadly aim at his head, and demanded of him to drink. No one was near; not a single footfall broke upon a silence so great that both hearts

could be heard in their excited throbs. A baffled maniac's gleam flashed from the girl's eye, while a determined look settled down upon her face. Her forefinger began to twitch nervously at the trigger, and the deadly pallor of her face increased until it was almost brown. He saw that she fully intended to fire if he did not drink. The senseless joke had resolved itself into a deadly resolution in a maniac's brain to take a human life. Only a moment or two elapsed, but they seemed an age. Time enough to die twenty times seemingly had passed when the young man said: "Put up your pistol and let me tell you why I will not drink, even though you should kill me. Drinking wine once caused me trouble that I would rather die than endure again. I am sure death could be no worse. Don't kill me; I have done you no harm."

Fortunately just at this time an older brother came in, who disarmed the girl after a brief struggle, and the young minister was safe. Do you not think he was cured?

A TERRIBLE ACCUSATION.

NOW and then it has happened in the experience of ministers that they have been called upon to endure the fires of a terrible accusation. The severity of such an experience can be testified to best by those who have passed through the ordeal. Such a thing changes the whole course of a man's life and leaves it indelibly stamped mark in early gray hair, somber countenance, stooped shoulders, and lines furrowed deep by the plow of pain. If you but knew it, every look, expression, and habit of a person has a history that, if traced to its source, would be interesting beyond measure.

Dear old Uncle Jeremiah Hamblin was a minister of the old school. He had reached the age of sixty years at the time our story begins, forty-one of which had been spent as a minister of the Methodist Church. He stood six feet and two inches in his shoes, and his mighty, deep bass voice could ring out to ten thousand hearers like a general giving orders in battle, or it could sink down to the plaintive tenderness of a youth pleading for constancy in his coquettish love. Never had a breath of evil talk marred his noble reputation. Everybody took it simply as a matter of

course that "Uncle Jere," as he was affectionately called, was just as good as good could be.

One day at a great camp meeting which this man of God was conducting, when the interest was at its highest, four young men, sons of some of the most prominent families of the community, raised quite a disturbance. They were mildly reproved in an impersonal way at first; but as this only served to make matters worse, the preacher called public attention to the disorder and said: "I have been taught never to reprove misbehavior in church, for those guilty are either idiots and irresponsible or knaves and incorrigible." The young men thereupon arose and left the tent in great anger, and went to their homes muttering threats of serious import against the ministry in general and the old gentleman in particular. No opportunity for putting their threats into execution occurred for a full year—in fact, until the time the next camp meeting came.

Owing to the extraordinary success of the previous camp meeting in its edifying and soul-saving power, the services of Uncle Jeremiah Hamblin were again secured, and preparations were made for the largest crowd that ever came to the old Grassy Brook Camp Ground. The great crowds of campers were already on the move, and covered wagons, barouches, carts, and horseback riders were arriving by every path and

byway. All were happy, eager, and expectant, confidently hoping that greater good would be done this year than ever before.

When yet about ten miles from the camp ground, Rev. Jere Hamblin made the discovery that night would surely fall long before he reached his destination, and he decided to ask for lodging at the next inviting house he saw. He did not have long to wait, for soon over on his right a quiet little farmhouse, with every air of home and prosperity, seemed to beckon him in. The privilege of lodging was gladly accorded the man of God by the farmer, who, calling his grown son, commanded him to take the preacher's horse, put it up, and feed it well. The son flashed a quick look of the utmost hatred at the old gentleman out of his black eyes from under his broad-brimmed hat, and as he led the tired horse away muttered: "Now I will get even with that old hypocrite if I die in the attempt." He was the ringleader of the crowd of young fellows reproved so severely a year before. Too great a coward to assault the old preacher physically, and yet with the murky currents of his hatred running too deeply to be satisfied by simply doing harm to his horse, he betook himself to bed that night to think up a scheme of such diabolical baseness as to do credit to Satan himself. Here is the way it all turned out.

The opening service of the Grassy Brook Camp Meeting was in the fullest swing. In the pulpit, with his great intoning voice penetrating to the remotest corner of the shelter, with his face aglow and his great heart on fire, stood the old preacher telling of a Saviour's love and calling men to repentance. Behind him on the preachers' bench sat a dozen of the finest pastors of the Conference, and two bishops were in attendance. Just as the sermon was closing, almost unobserved three men pressed their way in under the shelter, and when the benediction was pronounced made their way up to the pulpit. A black-eyed young fellow pointed out the preacher, and a thousand men and women were fairly paralyzed when the high sheriff laid a heavy hand upon the old preacher's shoulder and cried: "You are my prisoner in the name of the law. Consider yourself under arrest."

Never in all their history was an audience so completely dumfounded as was that one at the Grassy Brook Camp Ground that Wednesday morning. Little children screamed and good, brave women, who had molded bullets as their husbands shot them at the Indians, fainted away. The preachers were completely nonplused, and gazed in mute astonishment at the unparalleled scene. Uncle Jere was the first to recover his wits, and coolly asked: "What have

I done that I should be held a prisoner?" The other ministers crowded around and repeated the question, "What has he done?" and, "Who has had him arrested?" To this the sheriff replied: "This young man here, Mr. Nathan Green, has sworn out the warrant, and charges this man with theft." "Theft?" they said, turning fiercely upon the young man. "Theft? What has he stolen, pray?" With a satanic grin Nathan replied: "He has stolen my pistol and my father's watch and grossly insulted—but enough said; it will all come out at the trial."

"S-t-o-l-e-n your pistol, watch, and insulted" —muttered the old man. "Search me and my saddlebags, bring up your witnesses; and if I have done these things, I care not to live any longer." The sheriff quickly turned his pockets wrong side out, but found nothing. The great-coat that he kept strapped to his saddle was brought, but nothing was discovered. Then his saddlebags were emptied, and among the meager belongings of a poor old traveling preacher a beautiful thirty-two-caliber pearl-handled revolver was found wrapped in a couple of leaves torn from the old man's Bible, and a little further search revealed a handsome gold watch, also wrapped up in a leaf from the same.

The camp meeting was broken up. Fifteen hundred people sadly packed their belongings

and, with pained surprise and faith in God and man much shaken, wended their way home. For twenty-five miles in every direction the news was told. Little children heard it and wondered. Some of the campers died and went to heaven believing the old preacher a thief. Others removed in time to distant States and told the story with bated breath to scores of others of a thieving preacher, scattering widely the slander where it could never be corrected. The old preacher was hustled off to trial, bound over, and bonded out by a few of his friends. He was suspended from the ministry pending his trial, and went to his humble home in sorrow and amazement. His gray hair grew grayer, his mighty form became bent and stooped with trouble, and the wolf came to the door of his house. Then he fell very ill, and was swept down to the very brink of the river before the disease could be checked.

One day when the doctor thought there was a slight improvement, and before he had left the home for his next patient, there came a knock at the door which he answered himself. There were several men standing without: the sheriff and his deputy, Mr. Green, the presiding elder of the district, a notary public, and several prominent men.

"Is Brother Hamblin still alive, and can we

see him?" asked Mr. Green. "It is a matter of the utmost importance."

"Yes," said the doctor, "if you have business that is pleasant and you bring good news."

When all had assembled in the old sick preacher's room, Mr. Green, kneeling by the bed, said: "Brother Hamblin, I buried my boy yesterday. He had been ill six months, and came down to death in the greatest of mental and physical suffering. Before he died he confessed to me and all these gentlemen that while you were at breakfast the morning after you spent the night at my house he wrapped his pistol and my watch in leaves torn from your Bible and put them in your saddlebags because of the severe reproof you gave him the year before. He craved your forgiveness, repented of his sins, and died at peace with God."

. . . . . .

An immense congregation greeted Rev. Jeremiah Hamblin at the next Grassy Brook Camp Meeting, which was conducted from start to finish without an unpleasant incident, but with great spiritual profit to the whole country.

A STRANGE PLACE FOR AN OVERCOAT.

THINGS have reposed in very strange and outlandish places before now. The story of the island king who threw a very beautiful and costly ring into the sea, only to find it again very soon in the stomach of a large fish, is not so strange, after all. The man who sings a beautiful song of cheer and love need exhibit no surprise when in after years he finds his song or its fruits in the heart of a friend. The dear lady who bestowed that charming smile from her dimpled face one day need not wonder at her happy marital joys in the after decades, or that her investment brought that best of all returns, a loving husband. Have you heard of the golden bracelet that was found in the robin's nest after the housewife had fed the wee birds and protected them from their enemies? So now you want to hear of a certain fine young lad in the year 1870, who carefully and lovingly removed a very fine overcoat from his back in the dead of winter—a cold, snowy, damp winter, mind you—and put it—well, he put it in a place you never dreamed of a boy or any one else putting an overcoat in all your life. If a wager were consistent, the publisher of this book would cheerfully send a copy of it to any one who in one hundred efforts could

guess the place; provided, of course, that he or she had never heard this account before. Well, here is the story.

When the dreadful Civil War closed, a certain family in Georgia were left in the most destitute circumstances. Their negroes had been freed, their home burned, their stock all killed or driven off, their provisions all stolen, and the father and mother, with six little children, were literally face to face with starvation. Many did starve to death. After repeated efforts in several directions to make some money without success, the father provided himself with a few simple tools and went away from home to find work and sustenance, leaving behind the mother and six children, one of whom was a sickly little baby boy only a few months old.

Now, all the stories in this book are true, or nearly so. They are true to life where the fact itself did not happen. But this story is very true. It did occur—well, almost exactly as it is told here, for the writer was right there, although not the hero.

So great was the destitution, so widely extended was the abject need of the people all around that, a few days after the father's departure, the meal bag was shaken out and the last dust baked into a hoecake. This was cut into five pieces, one each for the larger children,

the mother eating none, and the little sickly baby alternately crying and tugging at the starving mother's empty breast. The next morning the eldest child, a sturdy American boy of thirteen, went out to seek work. A farmer drove by with a large load of fine peaches, and on hearing of the desperate strait of the family he agreed to credit the boy for a bushel at fifty cents if paid for on his return in the afternoon. The boy peddled the peaches during the day for one dollar, bought fifty cents' worth of food, paid for his peaches, and satisfied the hunger of the starving family. The next day this was repeated, and the next, and so on until the father returned.

The father had penetrated far into the interior and, being of a mechanical turn, had repaired delicate machinery and done other much-needed work, receiving as pay the products of the farms, largely provisions, for there was little money in the country. When the big wagon drove up to the front door and began to unload, there were four or five sides of smoked bacon taken out. The news spread like wildfire up and down the street, and a crowd of thirty people congregated around to see it. What the poor are to the poor no one can compute. So nice little squares of the bacon were cut off and handed to the starving families, whose mouths were fairly watering at the sight and delicious odor of the meat.

Well, by and by, when this same boy was seventeen years of age, he felt bubbling up in his soul the ambition to become a business man; to be a bookkeeper and to write a nice, clear hand; to make something and somebody out of himself. No schools had been opened since the war, and he only knew how to read a little. About that time a stranger came to town and offered to teach boys bookkeeping, arithmetic, and penmanship three months for twenty-five dollars in advance. Now was his chance, now or never. Nor is this an exaggeration or in any wise untrue. There is a time to make investments, to get an education, to learn a trade. A time! Opportunities rarely return, and when they do they often cannot be utilized.

But where was he to get the money to pay his tuition? There was not a cent in the family exchequer, and there was no friend from whom a loan might be secured. On close reflection the father remembered a clothing dealer that owed him twenty-five dollars, and they went to him with many misgivings seeking payment. The merchant grew wroth when told their business, and stormed much; for in those days it was dangerous to dun certain kinds of folk. Finally, however, he stepped back and brought out a fine overcoat which he said was worth fifty dollars, and told them they could take it along for the

debt or they would get nothing; that he intended to make an assignment in a day or so, and this was their only chance to collect the debt. It is needless to say that they took the coat.

It was winter, and the warmth and comfort imparted to the thinly clad, shivering boy were pleasant indeed. The coat was beautiful and the first of the kind ever worn by the boy, who felt well pleased with himself when he walked down the street. Then one of those strange and wonderful orderings of Providence took place. A man accosted the boy, closely examined the coat, and offered him twenty-five dollars in cash for it. His offer was accepted promptly. In an hour the money was in the hands of the teacher and the course of instruction was begun. The hungriest and greediest pupil that a teacher ever had was the thinly clad lad who came in that morning.

Now, do you see how strange was the place where the lad put his overcoat? If not, I will tell you. He took the overcoat off of his back *in the winter time and put it in his head.* Now don't forget that—*in his head!* He put it inside his cranium, where, instead of beautifying and warming an ill-clad and shivering body, and in a year or so to be laid aside forever, it helped to transform a brain into a mind, sight into vision, an unskilled hand into a trained hand, an awk-

ward and gawky boy into a graceful man of parts and accomplishments. What an investment! This fellow was surely looking to the far-off dividends, for now after forty years the rich, golden coupons are being clipped from that indestructible bond procured at the expense of privation and suffering. That boy is a great financier in the West now. I know what I am saying, for this writer was the delicate, wizened baby boy.

BROTHER BAYLESS'S FIRST SERMON.

WHEN young Brother Bayless graduated from the Grenada High School, he went before the District Conference and was licensed to preach. His first sermonic effort was in Curtis Chapel, a little mission church six miles out, before a congregation of about thirteen people and two dogs. The service had not gotten well under way before several things of a more or less unexpected nature began to happen. In fact, there is one thing you can always count on with much assurance—that something will happen. Never are people prepared for the things that do happen. Before one minute had passed, the bell on a foraging cow near by began to make such a din that you could scarcely hear your own voice. Old Brother Newsome went out to drive the cow away, and succeeded partially, but in doing so made more noise than the cow. Just in the middle of the sermon an old sow with six young pigs and three of four half-grown shoats, that had been peacefully sleeping under the church, were walked up by the distressful squealing of a pig, and such a grunting and mouthing you never heard. Young Bivens went out to quell that row, and gathered up a handful

of stones to throw under the church, yelling out each time he threw a stone: "Sui!" The rocks would always strike a sill with a loud sound, doing no harm to the swine, but convulsing the whole audience with laughter.

The sermon of Brother Bayless had been waning steadily since the first minute and a half of the rather pretentious index, and during the rock-throwing, squealing, grunting, and "Sui!" it threatened to reach a period. Another manful start was made, however, when these unfortunate interruptions had ceased, and full headway was almost attained in a few minutes more.

Now, Curtis Chapel was a summer house. A tuberculosis patient would have been perfectly at home in its fresh, pure oxygen day or night. In it the wind blew where it listed. At no fewer than four places (and these were neither doors nor windows) a half-grown dog could have been seized by the tail and thrown bodily out of the building without coming in contact, side, edge, or bottom, with the walls of the house. As for the windows, every light had been knocked from each sash, attesting the skill of the bad boys in the neighborhood who, like ancient Benjamin, could sling stones at a hairbreadth and not miss.

Will somebody please rise up and tell us why a neighborhood of professing Christians will permit a church, the building out of which come

those influences and forces so invaluable that even an archangel could not calculate their worth, to be so mistreated? Why do they let church property fall into such a ruinous state of repair and become so uncomfortable and filthy as not to be

Curtis Chapel was a summer house.

equal to a first-class hog pen? What commercial corporation with a hundred branches and agencies would let the home plant go down? The young have no reverence for God's house because the old have no love for it.

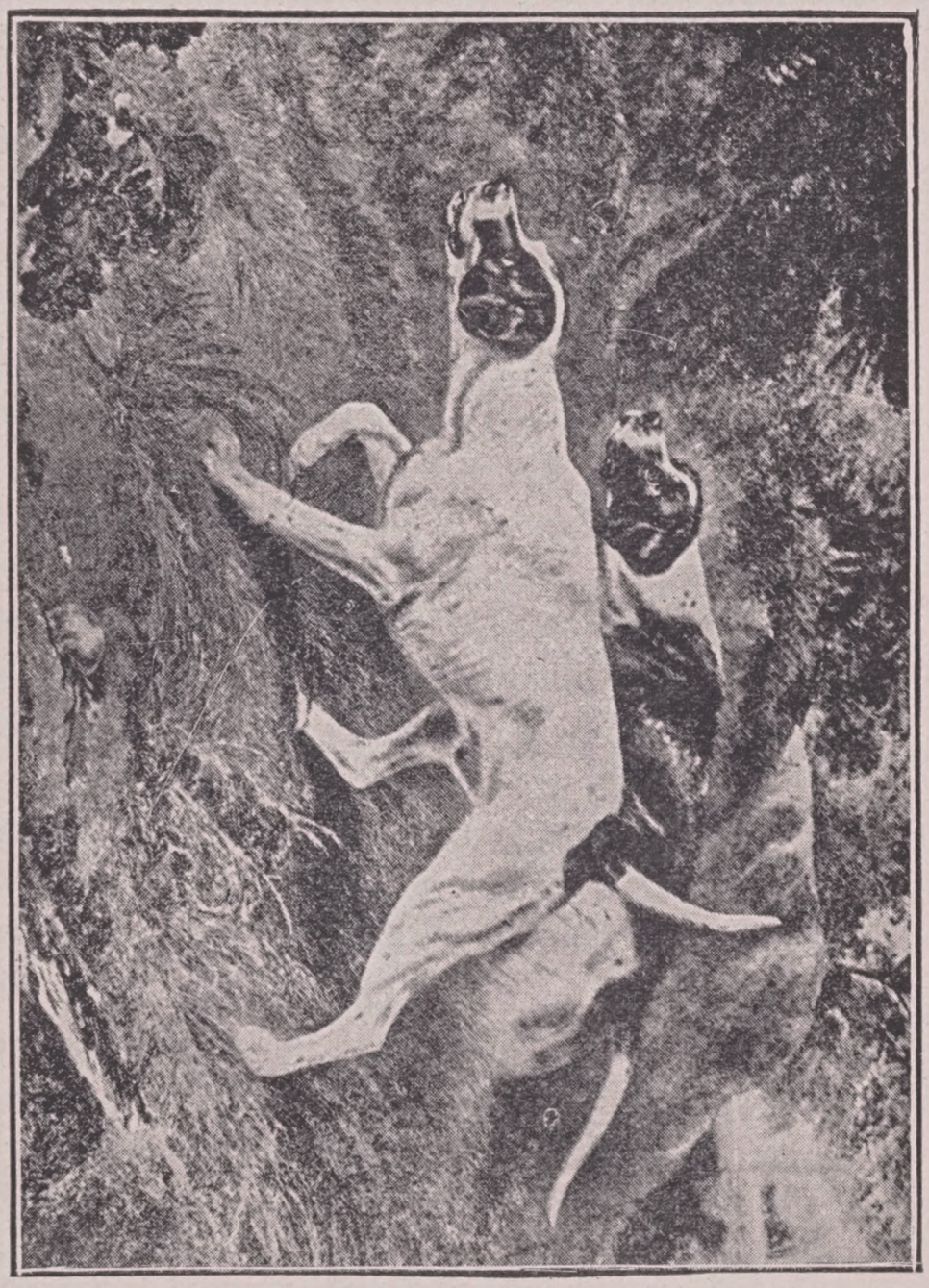
There lived in the Curtis Chapel community

a young Campbellite preacher, a fire-eating sort of a fellow with red hair, who from the day of his baptism until now had put up a valiant fight for his Lord with an implement closely akin to the one Samson used on that awful day of carnage among the Philistines. On the previous Sunday young Bayless had gone to hear this preacher, Rev. Mr. Dower, deliver one of his wonderful harangues; and on being asked by one of Dower's admirers what he thought of the sermon, had been so foolish and impertinent as to unbosom himself and make all his criticism known. He had said: "He fusses so much I don't know when he is not fussing; he quarrels so much I don't know when he is not quarreling; he ridicules so much I don't know when he is not ridiculing; and he scorns and defies so much I don't know when he is not doing these things."

Of course Dower's admirer went to that gentleman and repeated all that Bayless had said and more besides. So on hearing late Saturday afternoon that his severe critic of the previous Sunday was coming to preach his first sermon in his neighborhood, a smile kindled around Mr. Dower's mouth and he muttered: "Now we will have a little fun."

Dower's plans were instantly matured. At seven o'clock on the same Sunday morning Mr. Dower mounted his horse and, dragging a new

fox hide along the ground by a plow line, made a rapid circuit through the woods and around the old mission church and inside, up behind the pulpit, and on out into the dense cedar thicket eastward, where he lifted up his fox hide clear of the ground and galloped back home, not having been observed by a single human being. Well, about eleven-ten that same day he released his pack of foxhounds from their stall in the barn, where he kept them shut up, led them out to the trail he had made with the fox hide, blew his horn, and away went the hounds full tilt with mighty hue and cry right down toward the church, where Rev. Mr. Bayless was, with the most desperate effort, pulling himself together after his last interruption. The trained ears of the three men present to hear the sermon caught the baying of the foxhounds as soon as the first faint strains of that "music" were audible. As the music increased and the men had caught the very tones of the voices of old Bell and Bowser, the leaders in the race, and as they realized that the race was a warm one, they simply could not stand it any longer. So they got up and went out and began to look closely for the fox to come by. They did not see this, however; but they did see the whole pack run, lickety-skit, clear around the church, and old Bell and Bowser, forgetting the amenities of the situation in the



Smelling everywhere for the fox.

warmth of the race, with ear-splitting yelp and bay, leap into the church, followed by the whole pack of nine, run down the aisle, leap over the altar rail and back behind the pulpit, barking and whining and smelling everywhere for the fox which they thought surely was hidden in the church.

Now, Brother Bayless had not been reared in the country, and really knew nothing about a fox race or foxhounds, and therefore could not possibly appreciate this sort of thing, which has inspired the magic touch of the painter, the chisel of the sculptor, the genius of the poet, and offered the most interesting of sport to kings, lords, ladies, and presidents. I say Brother Bayless was not educated up to the point where he could appreciate this thing and give it just the enthusiasm and admiration that others might have given it. When he first heard the dogs he thought they were chasing the cow that old Brother Newsome had just driven away. The association of ideas is a wonderful thing even in such a moment. But when the whole pack circled the house he stopped preaching. That was the only thing he could do, as every woman and child of the remaining ten of his congregation ran to the windows and looked out. When the pack came in full chorus into the church and down the aisle and began to leap over the altar rail, Brother Bay-

less, with vague misgivings and strong panicky tendencies concerning mad-dogs, jumped upon the top of the pulpit and balanced himself by holding to the small rusty wire that supported the one greasy lamp overhead. The dogs, paying no more attention to him than if he were a stick of wood, completed their search of the house and, not finding the fox there, soon had the trail again, and were going through the cedar thicket like made, hot on the trail of the supposed fox.

This finished the efforts of the morning on Brother Bayless's part to proclaim the gospel in those parts. The meeting was decidedly over. The congregation was already filing out, excited beyond measure over the fine race they had just witnessed. Brother Bayless slowly gathered up his scattered notes, inserted them in his Bible, said good-by to his friends, and went home to dinner—and to meditate alone.

WHEN UNCLE MOSE WAS CHALLENGED.

AIR you de new 'mulgator here?"

Rev. George Pearce Powers paused in his work of straightening up and arranging his household goods after his late move of a hundred miles to a new pastoral charge. Looking up, he found standing before him quite a picturesque specimen of the colored race. Tall, sinewy, and straight, with that unmistakable gentlemanly bearing that characterizes the better classes of his race, Moses Mayfield stood before the new pastor, hat in hand, with a look of interest on his intelligent face.

"I say, is you de new 'mulgator here?"

Now, what the negro meant by " 'mulgator" Mr. Powers had not the slightest idea in the world. He looked at the old negro, puzzled beyond measure, not desiring to betray any ignorance to one of his race on the start. To do so would be to lose caste and ground that could never be regained.

"De new 'mulgator, *'mulgator*. Don't yer understand? De 'mulgator uv de trufe as it's writ in de good Book. Youse de new 'mulgator, ain't yer?"

"O yes," said Mr. Powers, comprehending the

Mayfield stood before the new pastor.

meaning of the term. "Yes, I suppose you might call me that. I am the new pastor. What can I do for you?"

"Well, yer see I wants a little 'vice. I done got myself into a little 'lemma, an' I thought I'd come ter yer to help me git out. I bin shallenged fer a rebate by a ole Baptis' preacher down on Harricane Crick, an' he done rouse up de whole country ag'in me, an' I think I hatter 'bate wid 'im sho' ef I gwine ter stay in dis here field uv labor any longer."

"How did it all come about?" asked Mr. Powers.

"Well, hit wuz dis way: 'Bout two weeks ago I wuz down ter hear ole Brudder Azariah Fuqua 'mulgate de gospel. Dar wuz a basket dinner on de groun' at Harricane Crick Baptis' Church, which is a ole Baptis' church fer de colored folks. I am de locust preacher in de colored Mefodis' Church down ter de lower een' uv town. Well, when dat ole Baptis' nigger git up ter 'claim de trufe, he tuck fer his tex' de immortal words uv de 'postle Paul: 'Brudderin, we air made a spectacle unto angels an' unto men.' An' if yer got time fer ter listen, I jist would like to tell yer what dat ole crazy nigger done git up dar an' holler out."

"Go ahead," consented Rev. Mr. Powers, laying down his work and scenting a good story coming. "Take a seat and tell me the whole story, and don't leave anything out."

Thus encouraged, the old negro began this most interesting account of the "Harricane meetin':"

"Yer see, de reason I came fer ter go down on Harricane wuz dat I got a new mule, an' sich a mule yer nebber have saw. I had a ole mule afore what wouldn't do nothin', so I sent 'im up ter Columby by my brudder Lige. Lige ain't no member, so I sent 'im to Mr. Moore, de mule trader, and says, says 'e: 'Mr. Moore, I fotch a mule here fer ter trade 'im ter yer. He ain't my mule, recollect; he's my brudder's mule. But he sent 'im ter yer by me fer ter trade 'im ter yer. My brudder Mose can't trade mules, 'cause he is a airdained deacon in de Mefodis' Church, an' can't trade mules.' So upon dat dey swap, and Lige he bring de one he swap fer, an' turn 'im over ter me. He look so fine I des hatter hitch 'im up dat nex' Sunday an' dribe 'im over ter de old Baptis' meetin' on Harricane. Atter I git in de house ober dar, ole man Fuqua he riz up an' tuck his tex', an' he fasten dem eyes uv his'n right on me, cause he knows I wuz a air-dained deacon in de Mefodis' Church, an' he knows also 'bout dat mule trade—dat is, dat my brudder Lige done eat up dat white man in de swap—so he fix dat eye right on me as he renounce his tex'. He say: 'Brudderin, we air made a spectacle unto angels an' unto men.' But dar wuz noise in de house when he said it. Pinky

Primm's baby, hit was a-squallin', an' ole Sister Susan she holler out, 'Amen! Bless de Lawd!' at the wrong time, so he compete de tex' ergin wid great emphidis: '*Brudderin,* as I said, we *air* made a spectacle unto angels an' unto men!'

"Well, it seemed dat he said dat rite ter me, as I said before, like he meant me ter take it all ter myself, an' nobody else. An' I jes' couldn't stan' it, so I riz on 'im an' answers 'im back: 'Well, Brudder Fuqua, I can't help dat, kin I?' He den turns, savage-like, full ter me, an' he says, says 'e: 'Yer shaller-pate Mefodis' tadpole yer, I wasn't a-speakin' ter yer any more'n I wuz a-speakin' ter ther rest.' An' I says: ' 'Skuse me, Brudder Fuqua, but I thought yer wuz.'

"So he sez ergin: 'Brudderin, we air made a spectacle unto angels and unto men. Now I'm goin' ter preach yer a sarment short and brief, fer thar air two more brudderin here what wants ter preach afore dinner. Fust, we air made a spectacle. Now, we ain't de fust ones dat wuz ebber made a spectacle, fer Moses he were made a spectacle, an' I axed er white man jes' t'other day in what did Moses's sin consist [Aside: "I jes' knowed dat ole nigger wuz a-personificatin' uv me all de time, fer I wuz all de Mose dar wuz in de house; fer I look all around fer ter see, an' everybody wuz a-lookin' right plump at me rampaginous, an' I jes' couldn't hardly stan' it no longer.

Dar wuz sho' trouble brewin' fer dat ole nigger"], and he said it were a ack. An' I says ter him, says I: 'I know dat, I know dat; but what I wants ter know is, *which* ack wuz it?' An' dat white man ain't nebber answered me yit.

" 'Now, Ligah [Aside: "Didn't I tell yer so? Dar he wuz a-bringin' uv Lige inter it too. Dat preacher not know Lige, I tell yer, or he leave 'im out sho', fer Lige always got *his* razzer"], he ware made a spectacle when he tighten up his belt, an' run f'um Jebelez fer dear life [Aside: "How dat ole nigger know anything 'bout dat?"] unto Mount Moriah, an' as he run he fast an' pray cl'ar till he git dar. But what I wants ter know is, why wuz Ligah a spectacle? De plain gospel trufe is dat none uv these kines uv spectacles is what Ise tryin' ter git at ter-day. [Aside: "Den I breeve free, fer dat let us bofe out."]

" 'Den dar's anudder kine uv spectacles. Dat's de kine yer lay on yer nose, close up ter de eye, an' what has two long pieces uv wire a-runnin' back ter hol' 'em onter de temples. But, my brudderin, dat air still not de kine uv spectacles this her tex' means.

" 'Den dar is dat kine uv spectacles what yer lays on de nose close up ter de eyes, an' what has hooked wires a-runnin' back ter de ears an' aroun' behin' 'em fer ter hol' de specs on an'

keep 'em f'um fallin' off. But, brudderin, dat air still am not de kine uv spectacles what air meant by dis tex'.

" 'Den dar is anudder kine uv spectacles, an' dat's de kine, my brudderin, what pinches wid a spring on de bridge uv de nose an' hol's dem-selves on dat way fer ter keep 'em f'um fallin' off. But,' and he kim down wid all his might on de pulpit shelf, 'still dat ain't de kine uv spectacle, my brudderin, what dis here tex' means.

" 'Den dar is jes' one more kine, one more kine, my brudderin, *one more kine.* And dat am dat kine what is jes' a one-glass spectacle, what yer pushes in ther corner of yer eye jes' so'—an' he done like he wuz a-gwine fer ter punch his eye out an' knock his nose off—'a spectacle, my brudderin, what has jes' one eye, *jes' one eye.* Dat's de kine uv spectacle we ole Baptis' is, my brudderin; we have jes' one eye—a eye single ter de glory uv de Lawd. Yes, my brudderin, de eye must be single ef de whole body is ter be full uv light. De eye what gazes on de worl' wid its vanity an' pride we done put out, my brud-derin, an' air as de one-eyed spectacle uv de Scripture 'bout which de mortal 'postle uv de Gentiles writ about.'

" 'Bout dat time one uv de sisterin what bin 'vorced f'um her husban', she riz up an' started fer ole Brudder Fuqua wid outstretched arms,

a-shoutin' as she went. She step ober de altar rail, an' Brudder Fuqua he give back. She step up on de step, an' Brudder Fuqua he give back some more. She follow him over in de corner, an' ole Brudder Fuqua he couldn't give back no more, so he wave his han's up an' down jes' like he fightin' bees an' yell at de top uv his voice: 'O gal, go 'way!' An' she sho' went.

"Now de trouble begin. Some er dem ole Baptis' come er-pokin' dere noses in my face atter dinner an' ast me what I thought uv de sarment. Well, sir, I up an' allowed, fust an foremost, dat it warn't no sarment; second, dat, dar'fore, I couldn't think uv it as bein' a sarment when it wuz none; an', third, dat ef I couldn't beat dat kine uv preachin' wid one han' tied 'hin' my back an' a dog muzzle on, I'd go to hoein' in de cotton an' corn, whar all sich lazy, ignorant niggers oughter been when dey wuz licensed ter preach an' since, too.

"Well, dat sho' made 'em hot, an' dey git hot cl'ar up under dere collar; an' when yer make a ole Baptis' hot, yer know what he do nex'? He jump right fer de water, 'kerplunk!' So dey done shallenge me fer a 'bate on de subject uv sprinklin' an' pourin' an' infant baptism, an I'm gwine ter knock 'em outen de water, too. Now, what I wants ter know, is dar any sprinklin' an pourin' an infant baptism uv infants in de Bible,

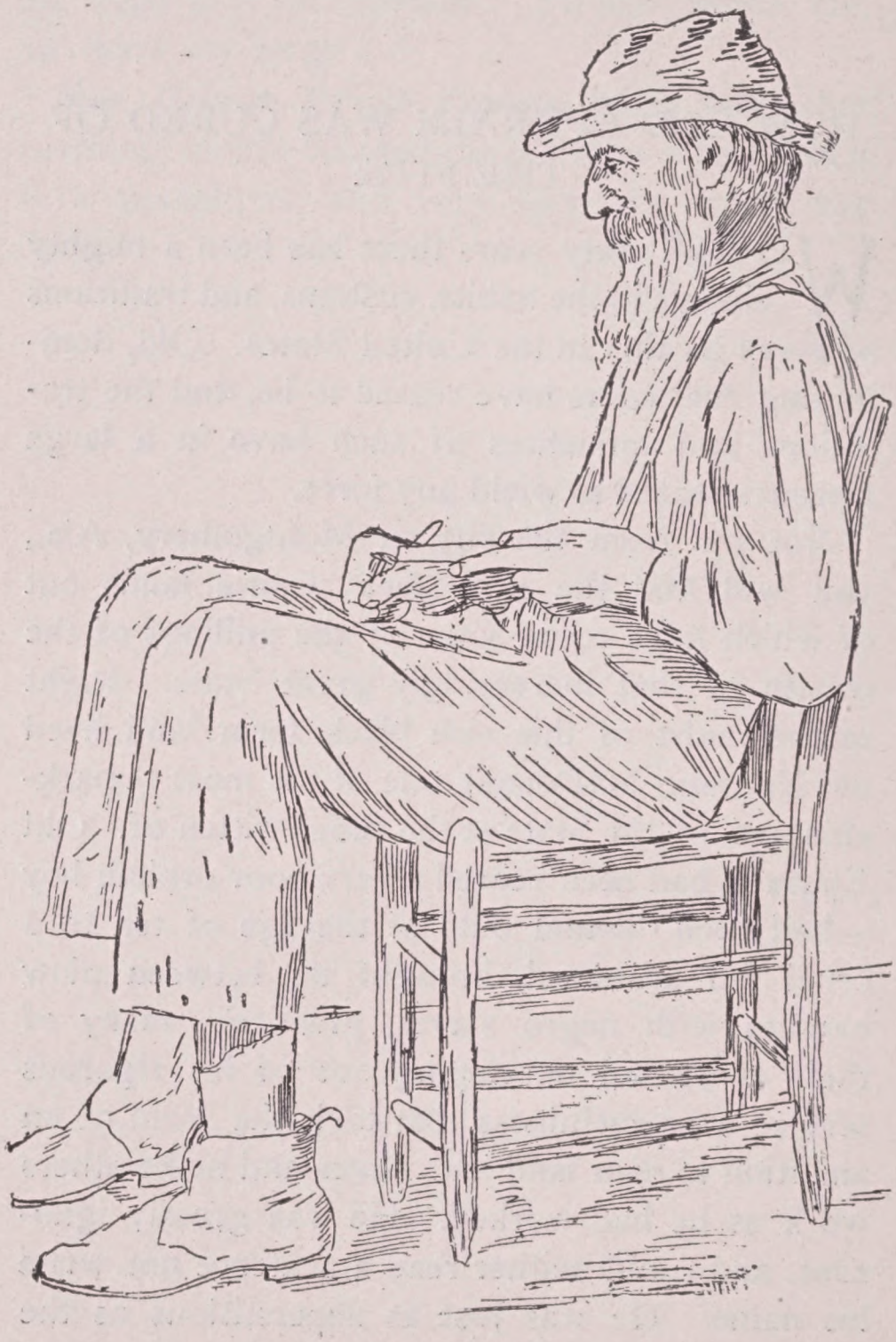
an' what is it fer, anyhow? I'll sho' knock 'em, an' don't yer fergit it."

Rev. George Pearce Powers, being busy that morning, simply handed the old man a half dozen little pamphlets, and very soon the work was done.

HOW OLD EPHRAIM WAS CURED OF THE FITS.

WITHIN sixty years there has been a mighty change in the habits, customs, and traditions of every locality in the United States. Old, dominating characters have ceased to be, and the traditions and influences of such have in a large measure ceased to wield any force.

Not far from the city of Montgomery, Ala., you will find the rich black prairie lands out of which have come some of the millions of the wealth of that increasingly great State. Right in the midst of this rich black farm land lived old Ephraim McDonald, one of the most remarkable men of the State at the time written of. Old Ephraim had been reared a very poor orphan boy —had been "bound out" at the age of ten to a cruel old drunkard, brought up between plow handles with negro slaves, practicing many of their evils, and developing out of his rigorous service a resentfulness that took the form of an ambition to own land and slaves and make others work as he had worked. He was grossly ignorant, and could neither read a sentence nor write his name. He was just as superstitious as the week was long. He regarded "signs," "times



OLD EPHRAIM.

of the moon," and all that, and withal was as highly prejudiced as one could be. At twenty-one he began his career with a ragged, much-worn suit and eight dollars and fifty cents. At twenty-three he purchased ten acres of hill land and married a poor neighbor girl no better off in any way than himself. Ephraim worked and made money; Liza worked and saved money. Everything on those gradually extending and widening premises was made to point to dollars. The plow points, the hoe edges, the blades of grass, the fence corners—everything was harnessed up, turned around, and made to bring in cash. Old Ephraim heard the jingle of coin in the cackling of hens, the lowing of cattle, and the grunting of pigs. He saw the silver in the cherry and peach blossoms. And when some neighbor woman suggested a front yard fence and a flower garden, old Ephraim thundered out, "The cotton bloom is the prettiest flower ever grown," and plowed closer to the front steps, leaving a narrower path therefrom than ever. His conquest never stopped. Acre after acre and farm after farm were added to his domain. He never owed a man a dollar in his life, and never promised a favor nor borrowed a tool or implement. When Ephraim was fifty years of age, he owned five thousand acres of the finest land in Alabama, and in his "quarters" there were seven hundred

"niggers," all his own. The acquiring of all this property was not easy. Ephraim was sharp and shrewd—never sought a trade and never lost a penny. He bit at no man's hook, and therefore was never caught with any man's game. He had no political or social ambitions, and believed that everybody should look out for himself or die. He had no relatives or prominent friends, went on no man's bond or note, and never voted. He just stayed at home and worked—worked all of every day and far into the night. He never grew careless. He got the highest prices for his cattle, cotton, and feed, bought at lowest wholesale rates everything he had to have, which, even with his great household, was very little indeed. He made his own sugar and molasses, grew his own stock, had his own smiths. His "niggers" carded and spun his own wool and cotton, wove it into cloth, cut it up, and tailored it into suits. He raised his own bacon, vegetables, and seeds, and about all he purchased during the year were some coffee, hardware, and such medicines as quinine, calomel, etc. His yearly cotton crop has been known to bring twenty-five thousand dollars, and his sugar, cattle, etc., to bring ten thousand dollars more. He never had a reverse.

A terrible accident when quite young gave him trouble all his days and finally brought the only

outside ray of light into his life that he ever enjoyed. A wild young mule had suddenly turned on him when he was a boy and planted a hind foot squarely on his forehead. After months he recovered his health, but periodically from that day on for many years he suffered from epileptic fits. The country doctor had tried his hand to the limits of patience, but never had been able to effect a cure. Now and then, without a moment's warning, he would fall face forward, beat his head on the ground, go several hours without recovering consciousness, and then be ill for a day or two. The severity of these attacks had increased through the years until at forty-eight they were just as bad as bad could be.

Well, about this time one hot afternoon in July old Ephraim, looking out of his front window from his bed, where he was slowly recovering from the last severe epileptic attack, saw a man advancing toward the house on the narrow path leading up from the "big road." The looks of the man were not prepossessing. He was tall and slim and ragged and dirty. He had not shaved in three or four weeks and had not cut his hair in six months. His "Hello!" was answered by Eliza in person, whose kindly woman's heart was moved by the recital of the fact that this stranger had walked two hundred miles, had had nothing to eat in two days, and was

starving. Disregarding the protest from old Ephraim, she proceeded to set before the man a large bowl of peas, some corn bread, a "hunk" of boiled bacon, and two or three large onions. After he had eaten enough to founder two men, he wiped his face on his coat sleeve and expressed very grateful and sincere thanks.

Mrs. McDonald saw that he was young, not over twenty-five, and had as keen a pair of black eyes set in his forehead as any man she ever saw. Inquiries as to his place of residence and destination elicited the fact that his last home was Tupelo, Miss., and "I am goin' to Georgia, whar it is healthier than whar I come frum, and whar I been sick of fever for three months. Ef you'll let me stay all night, I'll do any work yer got, and I'll never forgit yer."

Permission being reluctantly granted, he was shown an outhouse where he could sleep in comparative comfort. When the next morning came, the stranger did not seem to be in a hurry to resume his journey toward Georgia, where it was so much "healthier than in Mississippi," but was found after breakfast busying himself around that busy place leading a skillful and willing hand here and there where and when most needed. At dinner, with an anxious glance into the room where old Ephraim was still confined, he ventured to ask, "What's the matter with the boss?"

and after so long a time managed to get the whole truth of the case. "Why," said he, "I can cure the boss of them fits. I can cure him so he need never have another one in his life. My daddy taught me how in his life."

All this being repeated to old Ephraim created the liveliest interest imaginable. The stranger was ushered into his presence and closely questioned as to his methods, charges, time required for a cure, guarantee, etc., for even in so important a matter as this old Ephraim was not to be caught napping. To all inquiries, however, the stranger would give no information except that he could effect a quick, radical cure of this malady. As to the charge, that could be easily arranged "after you are well and sound and never have another fit." "You can pay me liberal," said he, "all you can spare, what you think it's worth, and I will be satisfied." Writings were entered into, witnesses summoned, and the work commenced.

The stranger lost no time giving his first treatment. He secured an inch-and-a-quarter auger, a pair of sheep shears, a billet of pine wood which he shaved down to a round peg, a hammer, and a saw. He felt the old man's head where the long hair grew longest, gathered up a good-sized handful, and plaited it together hard and tight, pulling and twisting the hair painfully all the

while. Then he cut the bunch of hair off close to the scalp, and, catching it by the tip ends and bidding the old man never to take his eyes off of him, went through the window to the porch and down the step to a large oak tree in front. Here he bored a deep hole in the tree, carefully deposited the bunch of hair therein, drove the peg in with the hammer, sawed it off close to the tree, and solemnly informed the old gentleman that as long as that tree stood he would never have another fit.

It would be next to impossible to describe the effect this strangely weird transaction had upon the household. Eliza had followed each movement of the man with wondering awe. Malinda, the grown daughter and only child, had not been ten feet away at any time, and old Ephraim, who had submitted to the hair-pulling and shearing with a dogged, martyrdom-like spirit all through, had raised himself up in bed and watched each step and motion of the strange incantation with burning, fiery eyes. The dramatic power the dirty tramp had used all through was startling and convincing. He seemed to be completely at home, doing what he was sure would effect a cure, and put such deliberation into each movement as to make one think each move and step a necessity.

A bountiful dinner was served that day. The

flock of poultry was invaded, a pig was roasted, choice jellies and pickles from Eliza's most private store were brought out, and everybody sat around and talked and ate and thought that something wonderful had happened that morning.

The next day old Ephraim was much better. The sickly weak lines of his epileptic face and the dull, heavy look of his eyes began to change and a new spring came into his walk.

The tramp was given the best room in the house, his hair was cut, a razor was loaned him, and a new suit of jeans clothes and some clean underwear were carried in to him; and when he had shaved and bathed and dressed, no one knew him, the change was so startling. Two days more and old Ephraim had sent him twenty miles away on an important business errand, such a one as he had never before committed to other hands than his own.

Old Ephraim never had another fit. Two years passed away and the stranger was called in to receive his pay for the cure.

"How much do I owe you?" said old Ephraim.

"Whatever you are willing to pay," said the man.

"Name it," said the old man.

"You bought the McGinnis farm of a hundred

acres, a mile down the road, a year ago. Give me that and"—

"What else?" said the old gentleman.

"And—and Malinda," stammered the man.

He got all he asked for and more besides, and was faithful to the trust reposed in him; for he made a good husband to Malinda, a kind, attentive son-in-law to Eliza after the death of Ephraim, and a faithful trustee of immense wealth when the estate fell into his hands.

WHEN THE ELDER CAME TO ROARING OAK.

A Monologue.

IT was announced about three weeks ahead that on the second Saturday and Sunday the elder would be at McGlinty's Cove and would preach at the Roaring Oak Methodist Church. This announcement was received with the most absorbing interest in every quarter. He had never been there before, and it had been fully twenty years since any presiding elder had made a visit to this beautiful spot, which nestled in between the lovely green slopes of the Cumberland Mountains, the little village itself resembling a handful of pearls in an emerald chalice. This little mission church had been left out for many years before, partly because of a lack of working force in the Methodist ministry and partly because, after long cultivation, there were no fruits to be seen. But the year before this story begins it had been taken back into the circuit, a good mission worker had been placed in charge, and already much good had been accomplished in the community.

So now the elder was coming—the prominent man of the Church who could do anything,

whose words were great, who dressed well and rode in state, and who could preach the gospel as none other could. Yes, the elder was coming, and the liveliest interest was aroused whenever that fact was mentioned.

Speculation was rife as to his looks, size, and general appearance. What would he say and do and how? Who would entertain him? What did he like best to eat? were a few of the questions propounded, but had to be left unanswered, for no one knew. The time passed slowly, as time always does when an interesting event is just ahead, like the coming of Christmas or a wedding day. But finally the long-looked-for date drew nigh, and the Friday night came that the elder was to get off the train at Beldin's Bluff, thirteen miles away. Onny Odom went to meet him, but got there a few minutes too late, just after the elder had started off down the pitch-dark road all alone, feeling his way along as best he could, in imminent danger of breaking his neck at every step. A glimmering light in a window near invited the elder in. Here he spent the night in a bed too short, in a room too small, fully conscious of some nocturnal activities which it would be impolite to mention. The remainder of the story shall be told by one fully qualified to testify, for she was there and saw it all.

"Yes," said Mrs. Susan Slimm, as she tossed hed red curls back from her thin, freckled face, "I speck I made about thirty-nine trips ter ther front door that Saturday mornin' lookin' down ther road toward Beldin's Bluff ter see ef ther elder wuz a-comin', and finally I allowed that he had fell off into Wheeler's Pond. What say? Don't yer know about Wheeler's Pond? Why, that's that pond three miles down ther road t'other side uv Barshebie with ther boggy bottom whar Elder Wheeler once rid his horse in ter let him drink a-comin' ter hold a quarterly meetin' at this very place. Ther horse bogged up an' r'ared and plunged so that he throwed ther elder off in ther mud an' water; an' them wuz all the clothes he had. Well, I imagined that ther elder had fell in that pond erg'in, an' so I put on my bonnet and went down ter Brother Cates's, ther locust preacher's shop, an' ast him ef he had thought uv sich a thing. Now, Brother Cates is a awful smart man. He moved ter McGlinty's Cove about three years ago an' opened up a shop, an' somebody ast him what he could fix. He said he could fix anything an' do anything an' make anything. They said he'd starve thar on them terms. But he ain't starved yet; no, sir, nor he won't starve, either. He mends wagons, fixes buggies, paints houses an' builds chimneys, lines coffins an' buries folks, shoes horses,

tans leather, sharpens plows, an' kin doctor. He is a pretty good tooth dentist too, an' kin mend shoes like all forties. In fact, he told ther truth when he said that he could do anything, for he kin 'most. He never wuz stumped but once. He did everything that ever wuz ast uv him—an' his price wuz always reasonable—except once, an' that was when Holly Horne, ther inventor, tuck him that thing that wuz a combination padlock, bird cage, an' steel trap, that'd shoot a chicken thief all uv its own accord when ther hen roost wuz bein' robbed. Yer see ther load got hung in it an' it wouldn't go off. He couldn't git ther load out nor nothin'. Brother Cates tried ter fix it, but it went off, bang! right when he wuz a-peepin' in ther crack of it, an' it like ter 'a' killed old Sam's mules on ther other side uv ther road. Brother Cates allowed he didn't care ter fool with no sich. Well, as I wuz sayin', I put on my bonnet ter run down ter Brother Cates's ter ast him ef he thought ther elder had tumbled into Wheeler's Pond. An' who do you suppose was thar? Nobody but old man Simeon Savage, jest gittin' good an' well from a bad spell of typhoid fevy. He oughter been well a month before this, but about ther time he wuz a-sittin' up some he got so terrible hongry one day that he called Aunt Betty an' allowed he was jest obliged ter have somethin'

ter eat. Aunt Betty she kinder believes in feedin' uv 'im, so she says, 'What yer want?' an' he says: 'Cook me a hog's head an' hoecake.' So she done it, an' Mr. Savage he eat up the hog's nose —that very part ther hog roots with—all by hisself, an' it wuz a great big hog too, an' that night he like ter 'a' died. He sent fer ther doctor, and while ther doctor wuz a-comin' Mr. Savage he began ter pray like all fury. He says, says he: 'O Lord, do help me; help me right now, Lord. Hurry up about it, fer its a-goin' ter be too late terrickly. Hurry up, Lord, an' help me.'

"Well, as I said, thar wuz old Simeon Savage down thar, an' I ast Brother Cates ef he thought ther elder had fell in Wheeler's Pond, an' old Mr. Savage he speaks up an' allows, 'No;' and ef he did, he'd git out; that he wuz not like old Woods Scott, who wuz a powerful good man ter work in meetin's after he got warmed up some. He said old man Scott wuz late a-gittin' ter the meetin' one year—didn't git thar until Wednesday—an' all ther preachers wuz tired out an' hoarse, an' the singing choir wuz laggin' some, an' ther altar wuz full uv mourners. An' ther preacher said: 'Brother Scott, lead us in pra'r. An' all ther people knelt down a-waitin' fer Brother Scott ter begin. But he jest riz up an' says, says he: 'Brother, you'll jest have ter excuse me. I am sorry, but I jest don't believe

I kin cut ther mustard.' Yes, that's what he said, an' allowed that ef ther elder should fall in ther pond, he could 'cut ther mustard' and git out erg'in.

"Well, sir, would yer believe it? While I wuz a-standin' thar a-talkin' ter them men at Brother Cates's shop, up druv ther elder as percumsquint as yer please. An' sich a elder! Onny Odom's old rawbone horse wuz a-sweatin' like he'd been druv through ther creek, an' that great big elder wuz ther biggest man I ever seed.

"Thar stood Bud Erwin, an' he didn't have a word ter say, either. Yer see Bud Erwin wuz ther man that said ef ther elder gave him any uv his sass or didn't do ter suit him, he'd mash his front teeth down his throat an' mop up ther road with him. Well, when he sot eyes on that elder, he wuz as silent as a squash an' made no more noise than a feather bed does when yer don't tetch it. Ner wuz that all, fer Bud he run aroun' an' gethers holt uv ther horse by ther bit an' holds him fer ther elder ter git out uv ther buggy, although ther horse wuz that tired that nothin' would 'a' moved him but a bundle uv fodder.

"Well, sir, it wuz preachin' time by now, an' Silas he rung ther bell like ther whole town wuz afire. Ther school turned out an' ther store closed up, an' everybody went ter hear ther elder preach.

I heard Bud say that ef ther elder wuz as big a preacher as he wuz a man, he would be a whopper sho'.

"The onusual crowd a-marchin' through town started all ther dogs ter barkin' like mad, an' they stampeded two young mules an' four yearlin's an' one billy goat, which went tearin' through town like Old Scratch wuz in 'em.

"Well, when we got ter ther church, ther singin' choir tuck their places and old Brother Cates, rattlin' a pocketful uv nails, set down in ther amen corner. Ther elder riz up an' gave out that blessed old hymn, 'I love thy kingdom, Lord,' an' then he tuck his text an' went ter preachin'. An' sich preachin'! Now, I am jest a poor, ignorant woman, an' never expect to do nothin' else much but make white beds and squeeze dishrags; but I guess ef I had 'a' been a deef woman, I could 'a' knowed ther elder wuz a-preachin' uv a sermon. Why, ther very fust word he spoke in his deep, bass tones ketched ther crowd, an' he helt 'em for a hour like old Brother Cates holds a piece of wood in his vise. What did he say? Lord, I don't know a thing he did say, hardly. I know his text wuz from one of ther Psa'ms—something about my tongue stickin' ter ther roof uv my mouth ef I don't recollect Jerusalem. He said that Jerusalem wuz ther Church, an' wuz ther most valuable thing ther world had; that it made

our fathers an' mothers ther men an' women they wuz; that Jesus founded it, an' God loved it better 'cause his Son founded it than ef he'd 'a' founded it hisself, as parents love their children's things better'n their own; that we oughter love it 'cause it wuz our mother, an' anybody that'd fergit his mother wuz all wrong; that little boys loved their mothers fine, but when they growed up they saw their faults an' forsook 'em, an' some even kicked 'em out uv ther way an' starved an' neglected them so much that they wuz about ter die, an' did die in some places; that when ther Church got a penny she had ter beg fer it, an' did not git it until a year after she ast fer it; that it wuz almost 'over ther hills ter ther poorhouse' fer ther Church in many places. An' then he jest got right down ter business when all these preliminaries wuz over. As Uncle Billy Dickens said ther fust time he ever helt family pra'r, he could not end ther thing, so he prayed fer ther President an' ther supreme court an' ther Injuns an' ther heathens, an' still he couldn't stop. He didn't know how, so he prayed for ther horse an' ther cow an' ther chickens, an' still he couldn't stop. So he wuz about ter begin all over erg'in when old Miss Sara got ther broom an' busted up ther petition, 'cause she smelled ther biscuits a-beginnin' ter burn. An' Uncle Billy said: 'What's yer hurry? I jest wanted ter git ther preliminaries out uv ther way.'

So about this time ther elder he jest got right down ter business. He said that we oughter love the Church, because right through her doors millions uv people had marched straight on ter glory; that many had crossed an' still others wuz crossin' now; and that by her ther saints wuz fairly a-sweepin' through ther gates uv ther New Jerusalem, an' unborn ages would enter into her glorious possession uv ther same sweet heritage. An' then he told how his own dear mother had tuck him by ther hand once an' introduced him ter President Andrew Jackson, who said that ther Church would some day take all her bashful children by ther hand an' introduce 'em ter Jesus an' say: 'These are our children, mine and thine.' An' then I don't know nothin' else. O, I jest got so happy that I riz up an' went at it like mad, an' everybody else in ther house wuz a-shoutin' too, all ter once!

"When ther preachin' wuz over, a whole lot uv 'em went up an' ast ther elder ter go home with 'em, but he refused all uv 'em but me. So me and Jeff we tuck him an' ther pastor home with us fer dinner. When we got home, ther elder said, says he: 'Sister Slimm, have yer got any tea? Fer,' says he, 'I can't drink coffee.' This sorter tuck me back, an' I said: 'What sorter tea yer want? When my sister's little baby wuz born, they gave her some ivy tea an' ther baby some catnip tea;

an' when her little boy tuck ther stomach ache, they gave him some ginger tea. Which kind uv tea yer mean?' 'Why, jest ther regular sort uv tea,' says he. 'I thought maybe yer would not have any, so I brought some along. Please take this package an' make me some.' Well, I never saw no sich tea in all my life; an' when he tuck his place at ther table, I fetched it in ter him an' says: 'Here, elder, is yer tea. It's ther outswellin'est greens I ever saw in all my life. If yer want some uv ther pot liquor, I can fetch that ter yer too.' But that elder never tetched it after I fixed it up so good fer him. But my! how he could preach! An' ther next day"—

But here the arrival of the rural mail carrier spoiled the remainder of the interesting story.

MICHAEL O'HARRITY'S TOOTHACHE.

IT was a composite picture of deep woe that the face and general demeanor of Michael O'Harrity presented as he appeared at the offices of Hebel, Blansford & Company, where he served as porter. His countenance was lopsided on both hemispheres at once, the corners of his mouth were fully two inches lower than usual, and he walked with a very decided, though somewhat uncertain, limp. A glance into his Irish gray eyes, that ordinarily twinkled with fun and bubbled over with wit, revealed a lack-luster condition from loss of sleep and great suffering; and that general, easily discerned appearance of pitifulness was patent to all.

To Mr. Hebel's amused question, "What on earth is the matter, Mike?" the following more or less full explanation was drawn forth, continuing from first to last with little or no intermission:

"I wuz jist thinkin', sor, uv swatehearts an' wild flowers whin yer question reminded me viry forcible uv last night whin I had ther toothache. An' I had it viry bad, sor, viry b-a-d--so bad, indade, thot ther viry remembrance uv ther thing sinds thim cold shivers up an' down me

spinal column—whin I had ther toothache so-o-o b-a-d thot niver a thought had I thot I'd iver git well erg'in! O-o-o! I had it so bad thot nobody iver had it any worse, nor half ther bad. Ther viry tooth itsilf swilled oop—itself, mind yer—it swilled oop until it wuz twice ther big it iver wuz before, an' three times ther big I hope it will iver be erg'in, sor. Yis, it swilled until I could na' shet me mouth no more'n halfway, sor; an' when I shet it more'n halfway, sor, it filt for ther loife uv me loike I'd tetched a bile wid ther small end uv a sledge hammer, indade. An' fer a little whoile I wuz skairt nigh ter death, thot I wuz a-goin' to pass in me checks, an' thin I wuz dead and burit wid scare, that there wuz na' goin' ter be a check at all, at all. Yis, sor, I had wan tooth on me left thot hoit sometimes whin I chawed tough beefsteak an' cracked nuts on it, an' 'specially whin I'd drink cold wather on it; but niver a minit did I think thot there wuz wan on ther right a-shapin' oop fer a achin' sich as I had last night. O-o-o! sor, it wuz both arfult and dreadfult, arfult and dreadf-u-l-t.

"Yer see, sor, it wuz this way: I wuz a-sittin' in me room a-watchin' uv ther kids a-playin' aroun'. Wan little spalpeen afther another wuz a-tumblin' over ther other, when all uv a sudden, sor, before I thought or even could catch me breath, thot tooth gave a jerk and a jump, an'

thin it raised oop on its hin' legs an' thin sittled down wid such a sorrowful, heartbreakin', bustin', throbbin' ache thot I jumped almost ter ther ceilin' an' kim down in a heap on ther floor, a-yellin', 'My tooth's druv in! My tooth's druv in!' sich thot all ther family an' neighbors kim a-runnin' in loike somebody wuz kilt intoirly. They said: 'What ther world's ther matter? What ther world's ther matter?' An' I said: 'Ther world's as sweet as a dream in June; but me tooth, me tooth!'

"Bridget St. John she said: 'He's got ther toothache, poor fellow, an' what'll we do?' An' niver a wan of them spalpeens had a idee uv what ter do fer ther toothache. Micky O'Neal said she had it once when she was a little girl—fer hivin's sake, an' thot wuz a long time ago, so it wuz—an' they cured her by puttin' a grain uv salt in it. So off ther whole pack puts to find a grain uv salt big enough. Thin here wan comes an' drops a grain in ther hole, an' thin—O-o-o! whin thot grain uv salt struck ther bottom, ther ache what wuz a-achin' afore wuz jist a cryin' baby ter ther fire bell ter what it wuz a-achin' now. Betsy O'Givins she gits it out wid a splinther, an' thot Micky O'Neal she says she believes thot it wuz a mistake afther all, thot it wuz na' salt at all, at all; it wuz sugar she puts in hern when she had it. Well, thin off ther whole gang

scuds ter foind some sugar, an' they fills ther hole oop plumb full of sugar, an' O-o-o! It wuz worser, siven thousand times worser instant than iver it wuz before since St. Patrick's birthday till now. An' I says, says I: 'Take it out! Take it out! If yer value ther loife uv a frae-borned son uv old Erin, 's niver harmed a ghost or a angel, take it out! An' they wiped it out wid a rag an' blowed it out wid ther bref, until ther tooth-ache wuz nothin' ter all this.

"Thin they puts ther heads together an' argued that coal ile 'd cure it. So they tried thot; an' ther more they tried it, ther more it didn't. Thin they tried soda, and thot made it worse. Thin they tried camphire, but it had wan too miny ingredients. Thin they got some laudanum, but thot made it worser still. Thin some one said: 'Sometimes cold wather will help.' Thot red-headed Pinky O'Donovan said thot. So they brought me a dipper uv ice wather an' tol' me ter hol' it in ther hole an' see if it would na' ease it. An' as I am a-standin' here, sor, it did; but O-o-o Laird, Laird! Who'd 'a' thought it or about it iver? Thot cold wather set ther tooth on ther ither side uv me jaw a-achin' fit ter kill Dennis McCarthy's old mule. Yis, sor, would yer iver belave it? Ther pain wint loike a flash away frum ther tooth thot wuz a-achin' on ther right side uv me jaw ter ther tooth thot wuz na' achin'

on ther left. Be smashed if it did na', sor. An' ef it wuz possible fer man ter dream it or divils ter wail it, ther toothache on ther left side uv me jaw wuz about twenty times ther size an' speed uv ther toothache thot had been on me right, so it wuz, sor. An' as I wuz a-sufferin' like a billion uv snakes, sor, I saw thot thot crowd uv Job's comforters wuz about come ter ther last swig uv ther bottle, sor, an' thot if I iver got well I'd have to raison it all out uv me own head an' cure meself. So I argued thot if cold wather stopped wan tooth a-achin' loike siven thousand, an' started another a-achin' loike siventy thousand, why, thin, warm wather would more'n likely stop ther wan a-achin' like siventy thousand even if it should by some accident start up ther wan again thot had ached like siven thousand. I'd siven times rather have a tooth a-achin' like siven thousand than ter have wan a-achin' like siventy thousand. So I yelled loud enough ter rattle ther shingles on ther roof: 'Bring some hot wather! Bring some hot wather!' So here comes Mandy McCubbins wid a teakettle a-b'ilin' fer loife; an' whin I helt some a little whoile in me mouth, O-o-o! it stopped ther wan on ther left, but it made ther wan on ther right start up wid four times ther vigor of ol' Satan's sting. I rolled on ther floor, an' ther top uv me head went off, bang! I saw eighty-siven mil-

lion stars; I counted ivery mother's son uv 'em. I died siven deaths an' lost all uv me kinfolks. Me eyes turned backwards till I saw out uv ther back uv me head, me neck broke, me spine spun, me liver loped, me lights lit, an' me melt melted. All me brains wuz smeared on ther ceilin'; an' whin I could na' stand it another minit fer ther loife uv St. Peter, ther doctor came.

"They put me on a chair, two men helt me legs, an' I helt ther chair. Ther doctor put thim things on ther tooth an' pulled an' pulled, but niver an inch would it budge. So he got another man to help 'im pull, an' two more men helt me, but still it would na' come. Thin he tried to give it oop an' quit, but I says, says I: 'No, sor; no sor! Pull! Fer the loife uv yer, pull! As long as thim things is on that tooth it don't hurt wan bit. Let 'em stay there—pull! pull!' An' so all ther way I got any ease or rest ther night I took ther doctor ter bed with me, an' he kept thim things on thot tooth ther whole night. Whin they'd slip off, I'd wake oop; when he'd put 'em on erg'in, I'd go back ter sleep. Thot's ther way I got through last night. But O-o-o! what shall I do this night? Fer thot doctor's drunk!"

THE HERO OF THE WRECK.

VERNON WINTERGATE was discouraged. Try as he might, he could not help it. His surroundings were unpleasant, his companions uncongenial, his problems insoluble. His discouragement had been increasing for months, having begun several years before this story begins. A friendly observer that had been watching events for a long time—a good woman who looked beneath the surface of things—said she did not blame Vernon at all for being downhearted and deeply dejected. He was such a capable boy and so likely; he had such promise and possessed such powers as are rarely seen combined in one person. "If his opportunity would only present itself," said she, "in the shape of some trust, calling, or pursuit that would absorb his tremendous energies and develop his best powers, what a blessing it would be just now!"

The verdict of others was very different. "Vernon is a big, strong fellow and has plenty of sense, but he will never amount to much. He is not interested in anything going on around him, and is absent-minded and dreamy." Another said: "Vernon Wintergate is the laziest boy I ever saw." A railroad man remarked one day:

"Vernon Wintergate reminds me of a mogul engine not yet on the main line—moving backward and forward, up and down a little unused sidetrack." "Why does not that young Wintergate help his daddy in his little store or get some other kind of a job?"

So it went from month to month. People sneered, criticized, judged with partial judgments, skimmed the surface of things, and delivered oracles and final verdicts concerning this young man as the supreme court hands down its final decisions in cases that have been heard on both sides exhaustively and an opinion rendered in the light of all the facts.

Is it not marvelous how the public judges? Knowing none of the facts and but few of the causes, it yet settles itself down as the court of final appeals in all the affairs of its citizens.

The hero of this story, young Vernon Wintergate, was the sixth son of ten children. His father and mother were average people of the community in which they resided. They were good, useful, and trustworthy. Mr. Wintergate was a small merchant, keeping a little store in which there was an attempt made to have in stock what any usual customer should happen to want. The demands of the community were not great; a few staple articles of any line you might think of were kept. There were some dry goods and

groceries, some medicines and shoes, some hardware, some empty shelves, a post office, some customers, some credit, and some leisure. Ninety per cent of the goods sold was given in exchange for butter, eggs, and poultry.

Betsy Hogan had just spoken to the village organist as she was going to the store with a chicken in one hand and a dozen eggs in the other to exchange for enough blue calico to make a dress.

Father Wintergate had reached the zenith of his development and ability when Vernon was still a little boy. He would never be any better business man, father, or citizen. All the enthusiasm, sentiment, and ambition of youth had long since evaporated, and he was just a patient, plodding man, struggling hard to make both ends meet—a thing both ends stubbornly refused to do. Now, for months it would not have surprised him a particle at any minute had the sheriff come up and demanded the keys to the store.

Mrs. Wintergate was well mated to her slow, easy-going husband. She, too, had settled down into an unending humdrum.

Nothing new had happened to either in fifteen years. The neighbors died, and they attended their funerals. The circuit rider came and delivered his bimonthly exhortations, but scarcely any impression was made on any one's mind except during the revival in midsummer and just before

Conference, when the deacons tried to get up the remainder of the salary and always failed. This was about all there was in town.

Poor Vernon! A young man with a body knit together like a steel rope, with a clear blue eye, reticent, just nineteen, he was burning soul-deep with an ambition to be something, he did not yet know what. It had been several years since he had attended the village school; it could now do no more for him. He dreamed of college and of a career, but lived on cabbage and corn bread. Cold chills chased each other up and down his spinal column, and his eyes fairly blazed at the reading of famous football struggles. Every page of the eloquence of the past that he could lay hands on he read and reread. His father's poor little, close-smelling store sickened him; his ignorant neighbors bored him. Everything he had ever tried he had failed in. He swapped horses twice, and was literally set afoot. He tried to farm, but everything dried up; and in Deasonville there was nothing else to do. His sister had married a farm laborer who worked for two hundred dollars per year; a brother ran a peddling wagon and lost about as much as he made; another brother was a cripple. What could *he* do? And yet those forces smoldered and blazed and burned, and his heart grew hot and throbbed with heaving emotion as he dreamed and yet dared to dream of a

future containing something better than he dared to hope for. He wanted to go to college, but college in his present condition was as far from him as the north pole. With moist eye and drawn face he one day exclaimed as he stretched out his good right arm heavenward: "I would give this strong right arm for four years in college."

And he did—almost. But I must not anticipate. There is but one way to make men reach—just one. That is to put the object of their overpowering ambitions *out* of reach. If crowns were kicked around by paupers' feet, they would be as cheap and common as trash or cobblestones. Things esteemed the hardest to get are held the dearest, and fickle fate requires assiduous courtships ere she surrender.

One day the hog trader accosted Vernon in his rough, blunt manner about as follows: "Say, why don't yer git yer a job of some sort and go ter work? Up in Omaha, where I went five days ago to carry a carload of hogs, they need some more help, and will pay you a dollar and a half a day in the stockyards. If you'll go, I'll pay yer way."

Vernon agreed instantly, and that night his meager belongings were collected together and packed in an old valise. Good-bys were spoken and the twelve-o'clock express was boarded for the long trip West.

Railroad travel was just new enough to Vernon

to be novel and interesting. He knew a great deal about it, however, and now proceeded to find out more. Every time the engineer blew the whistle Vernon knew the significance of it. Station signals, crossing signals, order signals, danger signals, etc., were well understood. The air brake talked to him in a language plain and emphatic. The glass-covered case to the right of the door of the coach, containing saw, ax, and sledge, he understood perfectly, and he noted the crank operating the emergency brake in the coach.

On the second day out he noticed that the train at times was running at tremendous speed. On inquiry he learned that it was four hours late. The heavy brake went on frequently as sharp curves were rounded and there was necessity of reducing the speed. Down-grades were taken at full speed, which grew frightful as the bottom was reached. The blowing of the whistle was constant, ear-piercing, and suggestive of dangers ahead. A dark, threatening night fell, with the premonitions of a storm. On, on through the intense gloom the train roared and plunged and hissed, spreading a pall of black smoke behind or shrieking like Satan in doom.

Suddenly there came a lunge more violent than any before it. The whistle shrieked a blast of horror. The emergency brakes went on with a crash, a noise like a hundred cannon sounded in

Vernon's ears, the car he was riding in split into small fragments, the lights went out into Stygian gloom, death and destruction for one brief second held its high carnival, and then all was over.

Immediately everything was in the wildest confusion. In the terrific crash caused by the heavy Pullmans in the rear telescoping the lighter cars in front Vernon was thrown out of the coach into a swampy place, with tons of wreckage all around him. His left arm was as useless as though he had none whatever, and to walk at all he had to lean so far to the right as almost not to walk at all. He did not know it at the time, being conscious only of pain and weakness, but his arm was badly broken and three of his ribs were crushed.

Screams and moans called him to his senses. A fitful blaze began to light up the scene. Men and women by the utmost endeavor were crawling from the wreck, bloody, naked, and mangled. The blaze grew higher, and Vernon saw that the wreckage was on fire. A poor fellow near by, pinned down by a small piece of wreckage, gave his quick wits their cue. He prized the beam off of him, and with his right hand dragged him twenty feet away. Another, held down by a beam that could not be moved, reminded him of the ax in the case. From a car not completely wrecked, into which he made his way, he secured the ax,

and with one hand chopped through the beam and dragged the injured man to safety. Then he went inside. By sawing, cutting, and knocking he began the work of rescue. Two other crippled and bloody men joined him and carried out his orders like children.

The engineer and fireman were both dead. Every other member of the train crew was either dead or so badly hurt as to be perfectly helpless. With one arm hanging limp and himself hardly able to stand, Vernon performed such prodigies of strength, skill, and courage as were almost incredible. As the work of rescue proceeded, men were released only slightly hurt; and these eagerly joined in the work of rescue. Ahead the blaze was growing larger and was surely approaching. It was finishing the work left undone by the wreck.

As they were going for the last time through the first Pullman, a low moan struck Vernon's ears, followed by an infant's cry. A section of the sleeper had so collapsed that it was pinning down its occupants into so small a compass that it seemed that no one could occupy it without being crushed to death. Vernon's ax immediately began to fall upon the partition. The flames were already roaring into the front end of the car. Blow after blow from the ax fell; but exhaustion prevented him from striking twice in the same

place, and his strokes made little impression. He realized that his strength was gone. Dizziness began to creep over him, but by a mighty effort he threw it off. These endangered ones must also be rescued at any cost. Blow after blow fell, cut after cut. The flames roared hotter and fiercer at the front end of the sleeper, and the heat was now unbearable. Again the woman's moan sounded, again the infant's cry.

The partition finally gave way and was removed. A crushed and bleeding form, clasping an infant, was revealed. Vernon, with a loud cry for help, seized the woman by the arm, and was dragging her and her baby to the door when three others rushed in, shielding their brows with their arms from the intense heat. They quickly but tenderly took up the lady and her baby as Vernon reeled to one side and fell crying as loud as his last strength would permit: "Save the rest! Save the rest!"

The third man, himself badly injured, dragged the prostrate Vernon to the door and out among the other wounded and maimed, the heroic boy crying as consciousness finally left him: "Let me alone! Save the rest! Save the rest!"

In a few hours the surgeons, the nurses, and the wreckers had come, and the work of caring for the wounded and removing the débris had begun. In another hour the brass-trimmed "Grayhound,"

the engine of the general manager himself, with his private coach, had arrived on the scene, and the mangled and crushed form of the lady with the infant that Vernon had dug out of the wreckage had been tenderly lifted from the ground and placed in charge of the surgeons and nurses. Here, as soon as consciousness and memory had returned and cuts and bruises had been dressed, the lady asked for the young man that had so heroically saved her from such a horrible death. Vernon was soon found, was carried unconscious to the general manager's private car, and was soon safely occupying the best ward in the hospital in Omaha.

It was many days before Vernon opened his eyes; and when his intelligence returned, he did not know where he was nor what sort of a place he was in. The kindly face of a young woman was bending over him, a young woman dressed in pure white, with a little white cap crowning her head. As he started to speak, she laid her finger on her lips and shook her head. She then placed some nourishment to his lips and bade him go to sleep.

The kindly voices of men speaking in low tones near by aroused him; and when his wits had returned, the following is about what he heard: "Doctor, how is he? How is that boy getting along? He, and he alone, saved my wife and

baby from a horrible death in that awful wreck a week ago. Spare no pains, no expense in caring for him. The Union Pacific stands ready at all times to reward such heroism as his, and as its general manager I pledge the company to do all it can in the discharge of its debt of gratitude. Have you heard that that boy saved nine other persons besides my wife and child on that awful night, with one of his arms and three ribs broken? This, sir, is the greatest piece of heroism I ever saw."

. . . . . .

About six weeks after the wreck the good, patient woman back in Deasonville, the mother of the young hero, received the following letter:

BERKELEY, CAL., October 2, 19—.

Mrs. George R. Wintergate, Deasonville, Neb.

My Dear Mother: How strangely things have turned out! Here I am at Stanford University, where I have hoped and yearned and longed to be since I was a little boy, but where I saw no earthly hope of going. Is it not strange that my path led here through that awful valley of wreck and carnage, flame and death? But I am here! Boys that can come over pleasanter and safer roads than I had to travel should rejoice. I am well and studying hard, and am resolved to honor my father and mother in this great institution or die in the attempt. With love, I am

Sincerely your son, VERNON WINTERGATE.

THAT TREASURY JOB.

I.

IN a little dilapidated New Hampshire town, noted for its poverty, squalor, and general wretchedness, lived the hero and heroine of this sketch. They had never been very far from its limits, had spent nearly all their lives within its small bounds, and they were now well up in years. These persons really had a very fine opinion of themselves—thought that they were very brilliant and as smart as a pair of steel traps. No one could compare with them. They knew history and art and language, or thought they did, and had a useful working knowledge of everything you could mention. What the mistress of the little out-of-repair house did not know about work, economy, and shrewd domestic management no one knew. Never a crust of bread was wasted at that house; it went into biscuit pudding. Never a meat skin; it went into the soap grease. Never a bone; it went into the soup. Never a scrap of goods, a basting thread, nor hardly a raveling; they were laid up for some future use. So at the time written of the lady's dresses had been turned and returned. Her hats had been made and unmade. The man's trousers

had been patched and repatched until one could not tell the patches from the breeches or the breeches from the patches. And so it had gone on for years.

Now, however, another era was about to dawn on their fortunes, or rather their lack of fortunes. Their long wait had not been in vain. They were about to come into their own. In nothing did the dapper little bunch of prejudice and conceit in the shape of a genuine Yankee show up to greater advantage than as a Federal officeholder a few years after the war in the old carpetbag days.

Holding a yellow envelope in his hand, the self-important head of the household approached the front door of his home one day and remarked: "Maria, I am strong in the notion of accepting the position in Georgia the President has offered me." As he uttered these words, the speaker lifted his eyes to his wife to catch her reply and see what effect the reaching of this very important decision would have on her.

Ezekiel and Maria Strong, as has been intimated, were typical down-easters in every respect. Trained from the very cradle to make the most of things, reared with only half enough of anything, with shallow minds and increasing conceit, two living, breathing bundles of prejudice, they could not, just could not attend to their own business, for they had not enough of it to keep

them busy. Indeed, it had been intimated that one reason they dreaded the bad place so much was because there every one would have to attend to his or her own business.

From his very youth Strong was a meddler, very contentious, had his own way of doing things, and thought his chief duty in life was to impress on others his own ways and methods. "For," thought he, "my way is *the* way, and I don't see why others can't see it *that* way." Like a certain old Quaker who once said to his son, "My son, all men are queer; all men are queer but thee and me, and thee art a little queer," so what Ezekiel did not know Maria did, and the sum total of the knowledge of this worthy pair measured the available working facts of demonstrable certainties of the generation.

Ezekiel Strong and Rutherford B. Hayes had become acquainted in some way in early youth, and Mr. Hayes had never been quite able to let Ezekiel slip out of his memory. Nor was this Mr. Hayes's fault. Ezekiel Strong succeeded in keeping himself in Mr. Hayes's mind throughout the years. As soon as Mr. Hayes (by the mysterious method known only to partisan politics) knew that he was going to be President, Ezekiel put after him with all his might and main for an office. After a long search, a deal of measuring and weighing, and long-continued effort to find

one small enough, a little treasury job in a village in South Georgia carrying a salary of nine hundred dollars per annum was unearthed and offered to Ezekiel.

"Maria, I am strong in the notion of accepting the position in Georgia the President has offered me. But there are several things in the way," doubtfully mused Ezekiel. "All them Georgians are Democrats, and only Republicans will be saved in this country. Then they lynched three colored gentlemen down there just the other day—poor, harmless, mistreated fellow mortals that did nothing to deserve such a fate. Then those Southerners are so lazy and shiftless, and spend so much time acting the lady and gentleman and all such as that, that I don't know just what to do."

"O, but then I guess you know," hurriedly spoke up Maria, "O, but then I guess you know that we can't stand back on that or anything like it. In all your life you have never made but four hundred dollars a year; and then think how much missionary work we can do. Why, I can teach the poor Georgia women how to be smart and industrious, to make their own clothes, to cook and stay at home, to raise their own chickens and pigs and milk and butter. And you can tell the men not to mistreat their poor colored neighbors and how to treat them and do for them. Why, maybe you can put down one of them awful mobs

and save the life of some poor colored brother, the nation's ward, for whom General Grant fought and all but lost his precious life, and Abraham Lincoln freed, and all our noble Christian soldiers went down there and fought and bled and died"—

"Do, Maria, shet up! When your tongue begins to rattle, you can't stop it and I can't think straight. Yes, all them things is true; but suppose them Southerners should take a pop at me and hang me"—

"For shame, Ezekiel Strong, for shame! As though the blood of Paul Revere was not a-runnin' in yer veins, and you a-seein' of ghosts and hobgoblins before you ever get started down there!"

"All right, Maria; we'll go," quoth the Hon. Ezekiel Strong resignedly, with the hope of lifting the benighted Southerners out of the slough of laziness and Democracy. "We'll go; and if we can't get any profit a-liftin' them out, we'll profit by them bein' in. We'll go."

So off went the telegram, collect, that settled the nine-hundred-dollar job down in Georgia, as follows:

Dear Mr. President: Offer received and favorably considered. Have decided to accept treasury position in Georgia. Will report there at once. Please forward all necessary instructions.

[Signed] EZEKIEL STRONG (AND WIFE).

II.

"Well, Maria, here we are away down in Georgia after our long and tiresome trip. How do you like the looks of things, anyhow?"

"I never was so tired in all my life. Those old pine trees fairly wore me out. Nothin' but pine trees, pine trees, pine trees everywhere—pine trees until I could not rest."

"Well, here we are at last, and my duties begin this morning. I will go out and take a look around and see how things are."

. . . . . .

"Who is that long-chinned, dish-faced Yank that keeps sticking his nose into everybody's business and meddling into everybody's affairs?" asked Joe Martin in a crowd of men the next day.

"That fellow says the streets need cleaning, the fences need whitewashing, that these hogs should not run at large in the street; says everybody is lazy down here and trifling. Who is he, anyhow?" asked Bill Gray.

"I don't know who he is, but Tom Scott and his wife were having a little difference of opinion this morning just as that gander-legged fellow was passing by. Mrs. Tom had just secured the larger part of the difference by drawing first blood from Tom's nose when that fellow ran in and got between them and said: "O, my dear peo-

ple, what a sight! what a sight!' But Tom reached up over the door and took down old Betsy, his seven-foot squirrel rifle, and said: 'Here, you long-legged gander shanks, you! I'll give you just one minute to get *out* of sight!' That fellow got; and when he was clear around the corner I looked at my watch, and he still had forty seconds to his credit."

"Why, that fellow told the preacher last Sunday after service that these Southerners didn't know how to worship Almighty God down here like they did up 'Narth.' Said up 'Narth' they had the flag, and the preacher never preached without saying something about Leencoln or Gr-r-ra-ant," said another.

"Yes, and his wife told my wife that she never saw women wear such hats and skirts in all her life. And 'La!' said she, 'how do you stand them dirty niggers in your kitchen a-doin' of your cookin' and lettin' them wash your clothes as you do?' "

"That old chap asked me if I thought they would lynch any negroes around here soon, and I told him yes, I thought they would, as my hen roost was robbed just last night and Sam Hill's pig was stolen last week. 'Just as soon as we catch the thieves,' said I, 'we will make them look up a rope sure.' This like to have scared him to death," laughed Bob Powers.

"I tell you, fellows, who that fellow is. His name is Strong, and he is working at that little treasury job here the President appointed him to. I move that we rig things up to-day for his benefit and have a little fun at his expense," said another.

"All right. About two o'clock this afternoon will be the best time, and the courthouse will be the place."

III.

"Mr. Strong! Is this Mr. Strong? Well, there is a colored gentleman up in the courthouse in a little trouble, and asks that you step up there a minute," quoth one of the party of the morning to the Hon. Ezekiel Strong.

"Wha-what's the matter?" stammered that gentleman. "Wha-t-t's he been a-doin'?"

"O, nothing much. Just wants you to witness his mark. That's all, I believe; and he is waiting for you now."

Mr. Strong turned his feet toward the courthouse with just a little hesitation. If Maria were only with him! Arriving there, he found the clerk's office full of men, some standing, some sitting, some walking about, all smoking so that the room was dim with tobacco smoke. Near the clerk's desk there stood a burly negro tied hand and foot, so scared as to be almost white to the roots of his hair. Near him were a constable and

a deputy sheriff, each with a big pistol in his hand, watching the negro like a hawk. The whole thing looked frightful to a degree. The solemn silence was broken by the sepulchral tones of the sheriff, saying: "Mr. Strong, this negro here is charged with robbing the hen roost of Mr. Bob Powers and stealing a shoat from Mr. Sam Hill. He wants you to go on his bond for one thousand dollars, and we will release him and give him his liberty. Will you do it?"

Mr. Strong hesitated. Where on earth was Maria? He wanted more time. He had to think about this proposition.

"Come, Mr. Strong. Will you go this nigger's bond?" repeated the man.

Still Mr. Strong hesitated. The negro, more frightened at the possibility of a failure here, motioned him to bend his ear down to his lips. It was done, and the negro whispered: "For de Lawd's sake, Mistah Strong, do! Ef you don't, dey will lynch me sho,' just sho'. But ef you goes on my bawn, I kin run away and git off. Massa Grant and Lincoln done done a heap more'n dat fer us colored folks. Please go on my bawn! Dese white folks down here don't know de nigger at all. Dey thinks dey do, but dey don't. Dey got a back-door knowledge of de nigger; but de folks up North dey got de knowledge of him accordin'

ter his heart hunger. Yes, sir, you all knows us sho'. So please go on my bawn!"

"What," thought the Hon. Mr. Strong, "go on this dirty rascal's bond and let him skip out and leave me to pay it? Why, it would take more than a whole year's salary to do it!"

"Come, what do you say?" said the magistrate.

"O, let's lynch the nigger and make this Yankee tie the knot around his neck!" spoke up one or two. "He does not care to go on his bond. Come on. Where is the rope?"

"I'll sign! I'll sign!" shrieked Strong. "O, where is Maria?"

"Get it ready, then, or we will hang the whole outfit," yelled a dozen men.

The bond was produced, and with a trembling hand Strong signed it. Two others witnessed the same, and the sheriff drew his knife and began severing the cords, one by one, that held the negro, so that he was now nearly free.

At this juncture another burly countryman that had hitherto said nothing at all stepped to the front and halted the sheriff just as his knife was about to cut the last bond. He drew a huge pistol, pulled the hammer clear back, and leveled it at the officer, inquiring in a loud voice if the "nigger" was going to be turned loose just to please a Yankee officeholder. "What is this country coming to, anyhow," said he, "that chicken

thieves and pig stealers are to be turned loose just because there is a Yankee here to go on his bond?" Then bang! went his pistol right in the sheriff's face. Bang! bang! went pistols behind Mr. Strong. Bang! bang! went pistols on each side of him. Bang! bang! bang! went pistols all around him. Three men were down on the ground, and others had staggered outside. Two or three had hold of Mr. Strong to keep him from running, and then the firing ceased.

When the smoke had cleared away, it was found that the sheriff had arrested the three men that had done the shooting and in stentorian tones called for order. Said he: "Judge Lynch has a big job on hand to-day. These three men will be tried, sentenced, and the sentence executed this very day. We must have law and order here at any price."

The dead men were rolled together in a pile, a sheet was spread over them, court opened, and the trial had begun. The first man to be tried had Mr. Strong as his witness. He was found guilty in ten minutes, his guilt being clearly proved. The judge arose with solemn mien, and in sepulchral tones sentenced him to have his right foot twisted off!

"Horrors!" thought Strong. "They surely won't do that!"

But do that they did. Two men commissioned

by the judge advanced, and, tying a big stick to the man's foot for a lever, began to twist the foot around and around until they had literally twisted it off. When it came in two, the two men threw it unceremoniously out of the window and carried the man out into the hall. "Godness! Where is Maria?"

The next prisoner was brought out and seated in the middle of the room. He was charged with murder in the first degree. In ten minutes he also was found guilty without mitigating circumstances. In the same solemn way the judge arose and sentenced him to have his left arm twisted off!

Two other men, right before the eyes of Strong, advanced and tied a stick to the man's hand and began to twist, amid the groans and struggles of the guilty one. It took a dozen turns to twist it off; but finally it came apart, and it also was unceremoniously thrown out of the window. This poor fellow was also carried out by four men.

The last case of the afternoon was then called, and the person was arraigned, charged with maliciously shooting down an officer of the law in the discharge of his duty. The verdict in this case was reached in fifteen minutes, and it was found to be an aggravated one. The judge slowly arose and in mournful tones sentenced this man to the

worst fate of all—viz., to have his head twisted off!

Two men sprang forward to carry out the sentence. Two sticks were tied to his head, and the men began to twist. But it was too much for Strong. With a loud cry for Maria, he fainted away.

Maria heard his call, however, for just at that instant her militant face appeared in the crowd.

The show was over and the crowd was now dispersing. A strange thing thereupon happened. The sheet began to move, and the dead that were under it came forth. The man who had his foot twisted off hobbled out into the yard and, getting it in his hand, calmly screwed it back in place at the lower end of his wooden limb. The man who lost his arm also calmly picked it up and screwed it back to his shoulder. By this time the crowd was all gone.

IV.

"Well, Maria, we are back in old New Hampshire once again, I am glad to say, which is what I feared would never be our happy lot again. As for the Georgians, just let 'em go to thunder, and them dirty niggers too, say I. I have enough."

H 70 86 1

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

00022009771